Batangas port bidder hits senator's hubby

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2001 ★ 84 PAGES 7 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 344 ₱15

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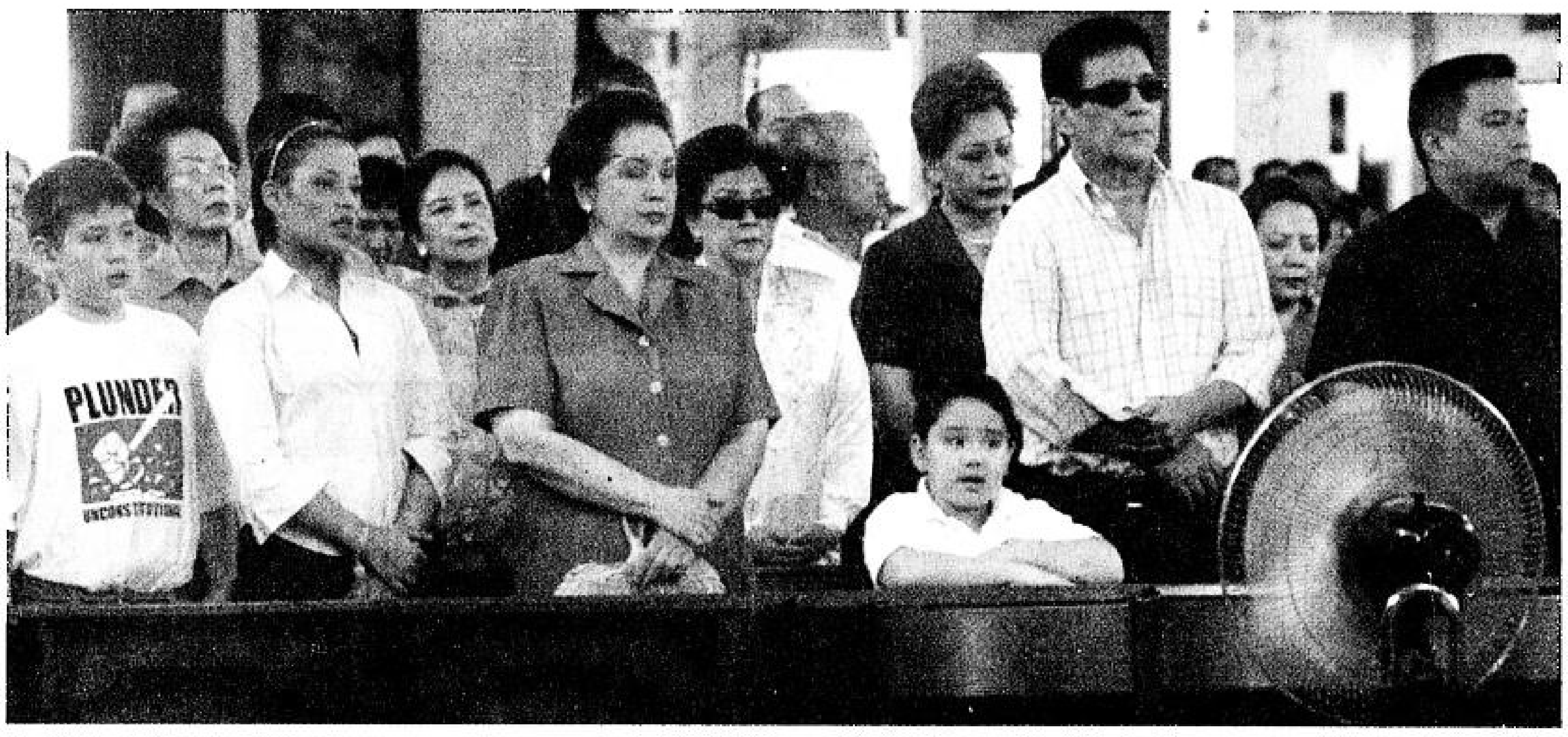
Short legs linked to diabetes

LONDON—Leg length may determine more than a man's stature, it could also be an indicator of his chances of developing diabetes and heart disease, British

SHORT/ A21

SC under pressure from Erap pals, foes

Impending ruling on plunder law agitates rival groups



ACTION superstar Fernando Poe Jr. (second from right) and wife Susan Roces (center) join San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito (extreme right) at a "Mass for Justice" held at the Pinaglabanan Church in San Juan. With them in the front pew are Jake, Jaca and Jacob, Estrada's children by Laarni Enriquez.

BY VOLT CONTRERAS
AND CHRISTIAN ESGUERRA

PARTIES for and against deposed President Joseph Estrada are "agitated" over the impending Supreme Court decision on the constitutionality of the plunder law and are preparing to mount mass actions to apply pressure on the justices.

A "vigil" by Estrada supporters at the Supreme Court building on Taft Avenue in Manila, scheduled to start last night, will continue until the justices cast their votes, a member of Estrada's media relations team said.

"People are getting dangerously passionate ... emotionally charged," said lawyer Leonard de Vera of the Equal Justice for All Movement and a leading member of the Estrada Resign movement.

He voiced his concern that a decision by the high tribunal rendering the plunder law unconstitutional would trigger mass actions, probably more massive than those that led to People Power II.

Sammy Malunes, spokesperson of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno labor group, said workers were "agitated" by reports that the high court would rule in favor of Estrada's petition and that the Estrada camp had a P500-million fund to lure justices to vote in his favor. "We are

SC/ A20

GMA denies secret pact with Bush in the works

BY JUAN V. SARMIENTO JR.

NEW YORK (via PLDT)—Midway through an American tour meant to demonstrate solidarity with the US-led coalition against international terrorism, President Macapagal-Arroyo has denied that she and US President George W. Bush would be signing a secret agreement to allow the return of US military presence in the Philippines a decade after quitting their bases.

"If I were to sign a secret agreement, would that be enforceable?" Ms Macapagal told reporters in Filipino.

Even from the safe distance of New York, the President has not escaped the firestorm of criticism back home for allegedly secretly negotiating to allow the United States to regain its bases and station troops in the Philippines in exchange for military hardware.

Ms Macapagal told Filipino journalists covering her US trip that any security arrangements agreed on as a result of her working visit to Washington would not include the stationing of US troops in the Philippines.

She stressed that under the US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty, Washington was allowed to send to the Philippines only military advisers and training personnel.

Ms Macapagal, who leaves New York for Washington on Sunday, is scheduled to meet Bush and key US officials on Tuesday.

She said she and Bush would be issuing a joint communique on what would be agreed on at the end of her visit.

The President has been put on the spot on the issue of the return of US military presence after unnamed foreign affairs officials in

GMA/ A21

'Caucasian' corpse found in Zambo del Sur

BY HERNAN P. DELA CRUZ
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DINAS, Zamboanga del Sur—The decomposing body of a "Caucasian" male was found in Pisaan Island here, raising fears that kidnapped Italian missionary Giuseppe Pierantoni had been killed by his abductors. The rumors were a complete turnaround from earlier reports quoting military sources that the priest had already been rescued.

Zamboanga del Sur Bishop Zacarias Jimenez said he doubted whether the body, which bore two tattoos, was that of Pierantoni. "We are not sure if that is Father Beppe," Jimenez said after viewing the body at the fish port here.

"I cannot really say at this moment that it is not him," said Fr. Janus Burzawa, parish priest of Dimataling town. But he added that "based on the tattoo, his teeth and even his height, it's not him." Pierantoni was Burzawa's assistant parish priest.

In Zamboanga City, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu clarified that there had been "no rescue, no recovery no release of Pierantoni."

Southcom spokesperson Col. Danilo Servando said the body re-

CAUCASIAN/ A20

18 soldiers killed in NPA ambush

BY FERDINAND O. ZUASOLA
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CATEEL, Davao Oriental—Last week, they burned down the telecommunication facilities of four big firms in Compostela Valley. On Saturday, the same band of communist guerrillas ambushed and killed 18 Army soldiers in the same area.

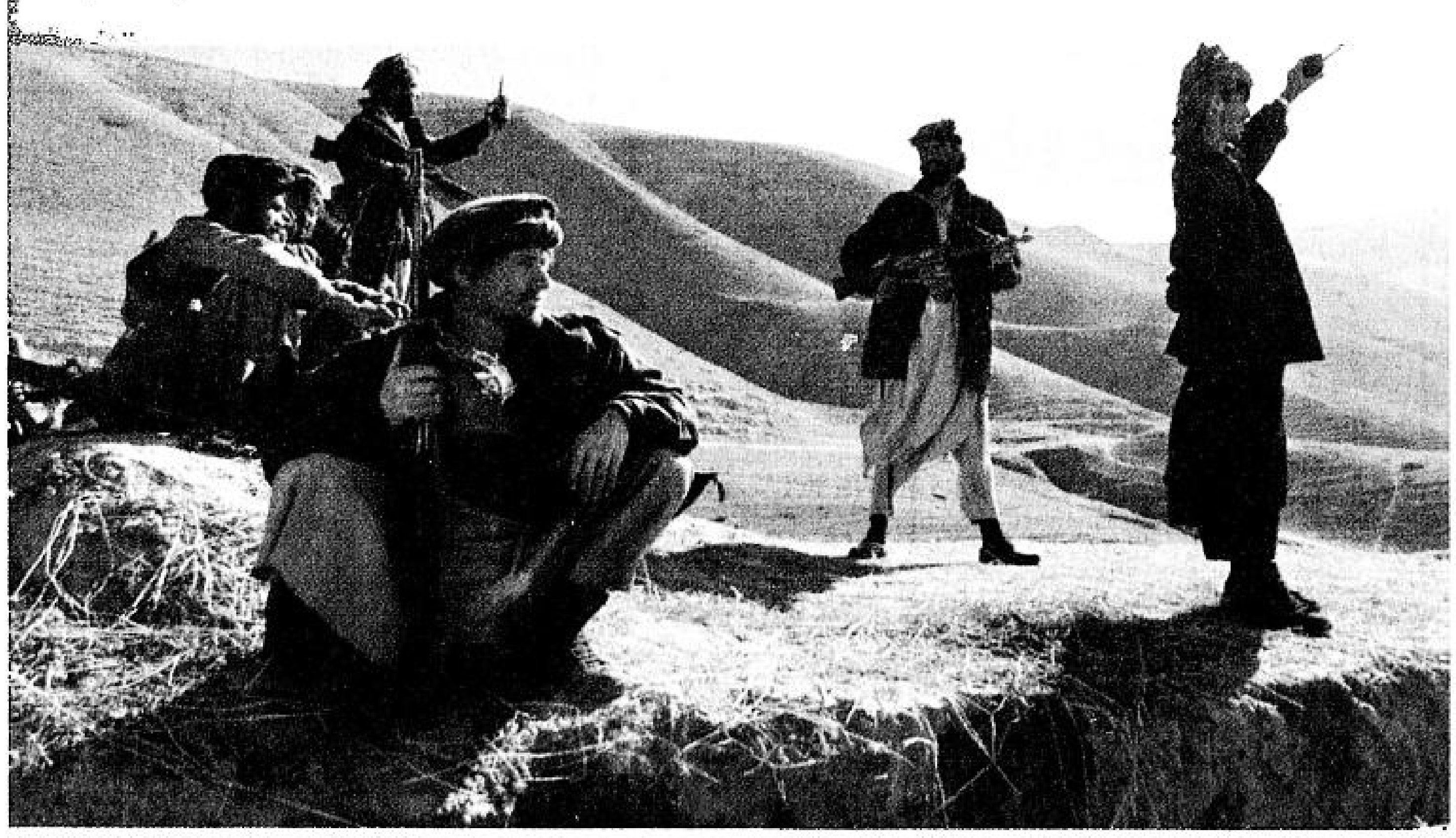
Capt. Marion Candava, chief of the Army's 4th Special Forces Company, told the INQUIRER that 10 other soldiers, including the company commander, were also wounded in the ambush staged by the New People's Army at Sitio Spur Dos in Barangay Aliwagwag.

Candava said a dump truck rushing the soldiers to the front hit a landmine before NPA guerrillas opened fire with automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

He said Lt. Edgar Paule, commander of the 27th Special Forces

18 SOLDIERS/ A21

Hunt for Bin Laden narrowed down to 78 square km



NORTHERN Alliance soldiers sit on the front line outside Kunduz where about 30,000 al-Qaida and Taliban troops are holed up. The al-Qaida reportedly massacred 150 Taliban soldiers to prevent their surrender.

AFP

KABUL—The Northern Alliance yesterday said Osama bin Laden was hiding outside Kandahar in southern Afghanistan even as the Taliban claimed that the world's most wanted man was no longer in territory under its control.

The hunt for Bin Laden continued as US warplanes continued to pound the last pockets of Taliban resistance in the provinces of Kunduz, in the north, and Nangarhar and Paktia, in the east, witnesses and press reports said.

Tough talks were also under way—in Kabul for the speedy creation of a broad-based post-Taliban government and in Kandahar for a peaceful transition of power in the Islamic militia's southern stronghold.

Abdul Salam Zaeef, the Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, told the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news agency that Bin Laden, blamed for the Sept. 11 terror attacks that claimed about 5,000 lives in the United States, was no longer "in an area under our control."

But Younis Qanooni, the Northern Alliance interior minister, dismissed Zaeef's claim, saying Bin Laden was hiding 130 km east of Kandahar.

"The Taliban are trying to cheat the international community so that they will stop the aerial

HUNT/ A20

Business should take look at itself

BY AMANDO DORONILA

ANALYSIS

FOR the first time since it closed ranks to call for the resignation of then President Joseph Estrada in late 2000, the business community is again flexing its muscle to attack the "politicization" of the national agenda, with the press and the politicians as the main targets of its carpet bombing of Philippine society.

In the recent three-day Philippine Business Conference, this umbrella assembly composed of the important business chambers in the country passed a number of resolutions that offered prescriptions to rejuvenate the economy.

The most noteworthy aspect of their resolutions was that the businessmen swiveled their guns to hit key institutions and groups, blaming them for the national malaise, except themselves.

The assembly was called in preparation for the national summit convened by the Macapagal administration for Nov. 26 to formulate an agenda for economic revival in the midst of the global economic slowdown and the political uncertainties of the US-led coalition's war against international terrorism.

BUSINESS/ A20

PAGLAS: Former businessman turned mayor.

Doctor, 'miracle worker' vie for top ARMM post

BY SAMIRA ALI GUTOC
AND JOAN ORENDAIN
Contributors

ELEVEN candidates are running for governor of the newly expanded Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, but public attention has focused mainly on two new politicians with a healing touch.

One is a former exile, a rebel-physician credited with diplomatic savvy. The other is a former businessman and three-term mayor whose town boasts of 100-percent employment.

Both have administrative skills they say the outgoing governor, Moro National Liberation Front founder Nur Misuari, conspicuously does not have.

DOCTOR/ A20

HUSSIN: Citizenship questioned.

SINO'NG SISERYOSO SA ATIN 'PAG GANYAN ANG SISTEMA?

Bidder hits senator's hubby

By Carlito Pablo

A FOREIGN participant in the bidding for a P3-billion Batangas port project has decried a recent government decision awarding the contract to a "non-complying" bidder and the interference of a former provincial official in the controversy.

Hanjin-Konoike Joint Venture, a Korean company, complained in a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo about a recent Philippine Port Authority board decision affirming a resolution issued by the PPA board in the Estrada administration which awarded the project to Shimizu/FF Cruz Co. Inc.

Records showed the bidding conducted by the PPA prequalification, bids and awards committee (PBAC) in January 2000 was won by Hanjin-Konoike with a bid of P2.9 billion.

The PPA-PBAC determined that Shimizu/FF Cruz was "non-responsive due to non-compliance with bidding requirements," along with two other foreign joint venture companies.

The PPA-PBAC ruled that Shimizu/FF Cruz's bid, among other things, did not comply with the 1,080-day construction period and equipment requirements.

In May 2000, the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel upheld the PPA-PBAC decision awarding the contract to Hanjin-Konoike.

Shimizu-FF Cruz reportedly mounted a lobby and the project was investigated by the House committees on transportation and communications, and good government.

Former executive secretary Ronaldo Zamora then issued a memorandum on Aug. 9, 2000 directing the PPA to award the project to Shimizu/FF Cruz, "pursuant to the instruction of the President (Joseph Estrada)."

On Sept. 5, 2000, the House committees on transportation and communications, and good government released its report which stated that the bidding conducted by the PPA was done in a fair and transparent manner, "resulting in a recommendation to award the contract to Hanjin-Konoike."

On Oct. 2, 2000, Zamora issued another memorandum to the PPA citing the previous "instruction of (the) President" to award the contract to Shimizu/FF Cruz.

"In this connection, the President has instructed the early implementation of the project, which is a priority project of the administration," Zamora's memorandum said.

The PPA board then passed a resolution awarding the contract to Shimizu-FF Cruz and forwarded this to the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, financier of the project, for its concurrence.

The JBIC has so far withheld its concurrence with the move.

But last Oct. 3, the new PPA board affirmed the resolution passed by the old PPA board awarding the contract to Shimizu/FF Cruz.

Min Ho Jeong, a Hanjin-Konoike representative, told President Macapagal in the letter that even the JBIC "is now confused about the state of affairs (of) the Batangas port project."

Min also decried that "an influential political figure" was (bandying it about) that the President had given the "go-signal" for the infrastructure project to be awarded to Shimizu/FF Cruz.

The contract is for the second phase of the Batangas port development project. Hanjin-Konoike completed the first phase in March 1999.

"What compounds the (project), which the port industry is aware (of), is that an influential political figure who sits on the PPA board as an alternate has been (saying) the President has given the go-signal to award the project to the non-complying bidder," Hanjin-Konoike wrote.

While Min did not identify the "influential" person, sources said he was referring to former Batangas governor Antonio Leviste, husband of Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda-Leviste.

Leviste is a Board of Investments governor and sits on the PPA board as an alternate to Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas III. He is also a former Batangas governor.

The INQUIRER tried to contact the Levistes but learned they are both in the United States in the President's delegation on her state visit there.

In its letter to Ms Macapagal, Hanjin-Konoike said, "We have been banking on the sense of fairness and justice of the new board constituted under your administration," adding the company has been a partner of the Philippine government in numerous projects since 1973.

"Madame President, we intend to remain your business partner in an atmosphere of (a) level playing field," Hanjin-Konoike wrote.

S'poreans warned vs abuse of maids

SINGAPORE—Singaporeans who can afford to hire foreign maids have been warned that those caught ill-treating them will be punished accordingly, the Sunday Times reported.

"A maid sells her services, she does not sell her person. An employer should not exploit his maid's dependence on him for food and lodging, for these are basic rights," the city-state's Chief Justice Yong Pung How said.

The 140,000 foreign maids working here, mostly from Indonesia and the Philippines, are protected by the law, he said in a written judgement.

"A maid's abased social status does not mean that she is any less of a human being and any less protected by the law," said Yong.

Most Singaporeans meet the income criteria set by the government to hire foreign maids but this does not mean they can abuse their maids, he said.

Earlier this month Yong increased a housewife's jail sentence from three months to nine months for beating her maid with slippers and a broom handle.

"Singaporeans should not take this situation for granted, for the luxury of having foreign help depends greatly on the good relations with neighboring states," he said.

The minimum salary requirement to employ a maid in Singapore is $30,000 Singapore (US$16,483) a year. *AFP*

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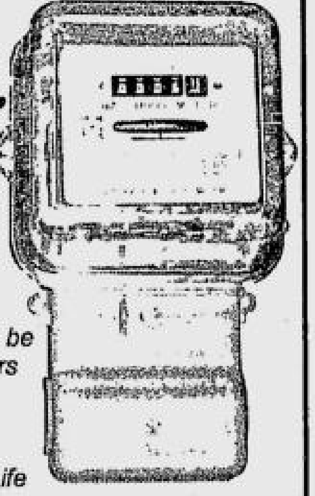

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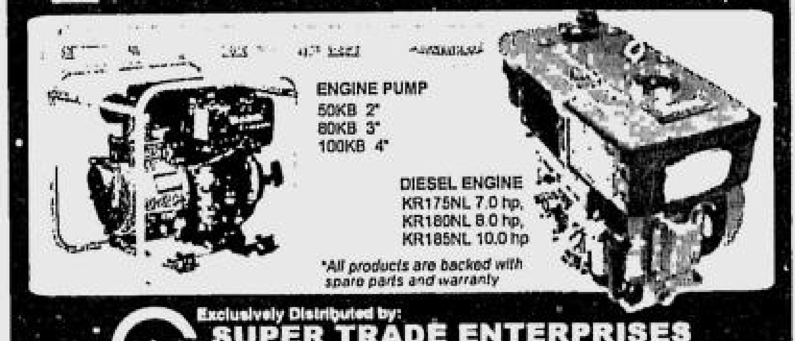

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Lina blames media for kidnaps

BY RAJ PADILLA
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Kidnapping is admittedly on the rise, but that's partly because of media's "sensationalizing" crime reports, Interior Secretary Jose Lina said yesterday.

If media people would only observe "self-restraint" in their reporting of kidnap stories, and especially in their handling of the ransom and pay-off angle, many kidnappings could be prevented, Lina said.

"Let's face it. Many have been influenced by these stories. Some of these are copycat kidnappings," Lina said in Filipino.

He was convinced some of the arrested kidnappers were copycats because they seemed untrained and did not have the capability to carry out kidnap-for-ransom activities, Lina said during a dialogue with local officials at the Arevalo District here.

The interior secretary said that in Hong Kong and China, kidnap stories are not given much prominence because of their "adverse effect" on government anti-crime campaigns.

Lina claimed that kidnap-for-ransom activities began to flourish only after much publicity was given to the huge ransoms paid to the Abu Sayyaf for the release of the tourists kidnapped from the Sipadan resort in Malaysia last year.

The Citizen's Action Against Crime has reported that from January to September this year, at least 202 people were kidnapped in the country.

The report prompted the Macapagal-Arroyo administration to give closer attention to kidnap-for-ransom activities.

Recently, Lina authorized the hiring of additional civilian agents to augment the forces of the Philippine National Police in crime-prone areas.

Unlike before, however, the screening and training process for the additional agents would be more rigid, he said.

"We want them to be as competent and as skilled as their police counterparts," he said.

He said mission orders should also be explained clearly before civilian agents are sent out amid fears that the use of civilian agents was open to abuse.

"This is not something new. Existing rules in the PNP and the Armed Forces allow the hiring of civilian agents whose services are needed in anti-crime operations," he said. "Even the National Bureau of Investigations has its share of civilian agents."

Many of the civilian agents will be assigned to Binondo, the home and place of work to many Chinese and Chinese-Filipinos, many of whom have become kidnap victims.

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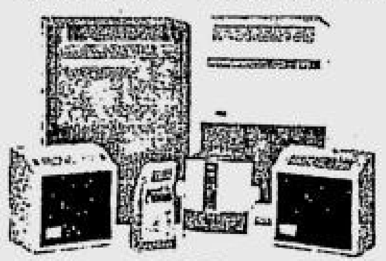

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AFP reports Nur-Abu alliance

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

NUR Misuari, the outgoing governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, has reportedly linked up with the extremist Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang and may be planning to stage terrorist attacks in the Nov. 26 polls, the military's Southern Command said yesterday.

Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, the chief of the Southern Command, said reports of the link-up of the two groups composed mostly of Tausug Muslims, indicated that Misuari and his men are intending to sow violence in next week's elections that will choose the next ARMM governor.

"There is verified information that Misuari's group would be committing atrocities in Zamboanga City and Jolo during the forthcoming ARMM polls on Nov. 26," Cimatu told defense reporters.

He said Misuari has long been trying to lure the Abu Sayyaf bandits into joining him in Jolo.

He cited a Nov. 8 meeting in Mt. Tiyanan in Sitangaykay, Parang, Sulu between Misuari and Abu Sayyaf Commanders Robot (Galib Andang), Mujib Susukan and "a certain Murphy."

Cimatu said the three Abu Sayyaf commanders brought nine armed followers to the meeting.

Cimatu said whatever it is the two groups are planning to do has to be "pre-empted."

"We're deploying troops to prevent atrocities," he said.

Misuari, who was ousted last April as chair of the Moro National Liberation Front by the MNLF executive council led by Parouk Hussin, is opposed to the holding of elections.

After his ouster and elevation to the post of chairman emeritus, Misuari attempted a merger with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a breakaway faction of the MNLF.

Hussin is the administration candidate for ARMM governor in the coming polls.

ARMM bets OK rules

BY BUTCH D. ENERIO AND EDWIN O. FERNANDEZ
PDI Mindanao Bureau

MARAWI CITY—Laying the groundwork for orderly, peaceful and credible elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the candidates have agreed to abide by the rules governing the electoral process on Nov. 26.

Resurreccion Borra, election commissioner in charge for Lanao del Sur, met last Friday with most of the 65 candidates in the ARMM elections at the Marawi Resort here.

The candidates include 14 for governor, nine for vice governor and 42 for assemblyman (26 in the first district and 16 in the second district).

There are some 295,000 voters in Lanao del Sur province, including Marawi City, who will elect a governor, vice governor and three assemblymen for every district who will each serve for three years.

Borra said the Comelec will use all possible means of communication to reach the 38 towns of the province in order to ensure orderly and transparent elections.

In areas where there is no electricity, Borra said, Comelec officers should find a remedy to the problem.

The Comelec has set Dec. 1 as the deadline for the proclamation of election winners. The winners elected will assume office immediately and not have to wait until September as mandated by law.

"We should not create a lull in governance and have the winners wait 10 months before they assume office," Borra said.

In Maguindanao, many residents appear to be uninterested in the elections.

"Candidates seldom hold political rallies to explain their programs of government," said Amerodin Kasan, 40, of Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

On the radio, the only campaign programs heard are those of opposition gubernatorial candidate Ibrahim Paglas and his running mate, Ben Loong.

"We have not seen the gubernatorial bets," said Gumbay Salem, 38, of Barangay Gang, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao.

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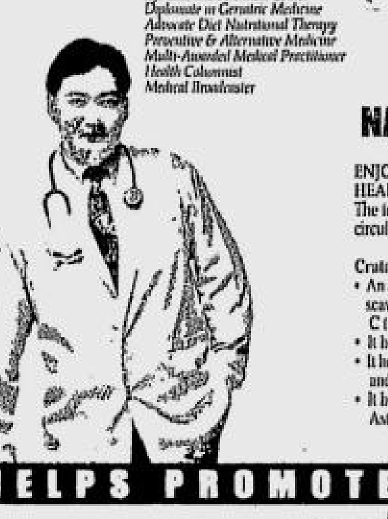

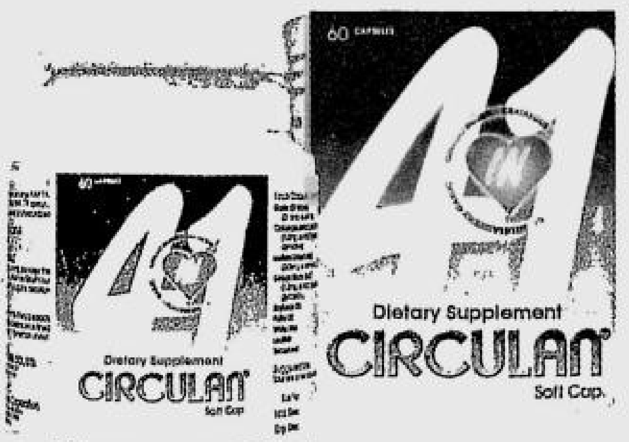

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Basilan's woes far from over

CIVILIAN volunteer Cesar Ramirez stands guard as his wife visits their abandoned home in Balobo Thursday. Two of Ramirez's sons were beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf. AP

BY JIM GOMEZ
Associated Press Writer

BALOBO, Basilan—While the United States wages war in Afghanistan, the Philippines is fighting its own terrorist enemy and claiming progress.

Now, as part of its global campaign against terrorism, Washington is ready to provide military training and equipment to help its longtime ally step up efforts to crush the small Abu Sayyaf movement, which has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Details of the aid are expected to emerge after President Macapagal-Arroyo meets with President George W. Bush at the White House on Tuesday.

The militant Muslims of Abu Sayyaf have been tied to a string of killings, kidnappings, bombings and other violence in the South, which is a crushingly poor home for about 5 million Muslims in the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country.

In the most recent incident, the guerrillas, who already held a batch of hostages that include Americans, kidnapped 32 people during an Aug. 2 attack on Balobo, a small, Christian-dominated farming village on Basilan island. Ten captives were beheaded; the rest either were freed or escaped in succeeding days.

Abu Sayyaf was created just a decade ago by young Muslim guerrillas disillusioned with a protracted separatist rebellion being waged by older warriors.

Many Filipinos accuse the guerrillas of using the label of Muslim independence as a smoke screen for banditry, but even military leaders concede economic ills are a major factor in the region's unrest.

Arriving by ferry at the filthy wharf in Isabela, capital of the island province of Basilan, visitors are assaulted by shouts from a horde of jobless young men offering themselves as porters, drivers or guides.

The rebels of Abu Sayyaf are being pursued by more than 7,000 Filipino soldiers as they drag American missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and Filipino nurse Deborah Yap through mountainous jungle.

The three captives are the only ones left from dozens of hostages taken in a kidnapping spree that started in May. Many were beheaded, and some reportedly were ransomed off. Others were freed or escaped. A third American, Guillermo Sobero, was killed.

"We don't like to see our friend and ally of many years, the Philippines, being attacked by this ruthless group," Adm. Dennis Blair, chief of the US Pacific Command, said Wednesday on his visit to Zamboanga City to meet with Filipino generals.

Philippine military officers contend Abu Sayyaf's days are numbered following a series of battle losses since June. From a peak of about 1,200 guerrillas in Basilan, the group's ranks have dwindled to about 100, says Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, who heads the military's Southern Command.

Now that militias have been organized to protect Basilan's cities and villages, the army's offensive has reached "the annihilation phase," Cimatu said.

"If you have four nails for a coffin, that's the third nail already," he said.

The fourth nail would be introducing economic development to address poverty and years of neglect, which are among the root causes of the unrest, Cimatu said.

In downtown Isabela, posters announce a reward of nearly $100,000 for information leading to a rebel's arrest. They feature mugshots of rebel commander Abu Sabaya beside a drawing of a pot brimming with cash.

Military officers say the rewards have led to the capture of more than 200 guerrillas and commanders. Pressure from the army's offensive has led nearly 100 other rebels to surrender, and more than 150 rebels have been reported killed in clashes, mostly initiated by government troops.

More than 30 soldiers have died and 157 others been wounded since June, the military says.

The government is pursuing peace talks with a larger Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. It signed a peace accord in 1996 with a third movement, the Moro National Liberation Front, after that group dropped its independence goal in exchange for limited autonomy. *AP*

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Wednesday, 5 December; 1:00 — 5:00 p.m.
Topic: PROBLEMS IN JUDICIAL REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS
Lecturer: Dr. PACIFICO A. AGABIN, University of the Philippines College of Law

Thursday, 6 December; 1:00 — 3:00 p.m.
Topic: LIMITATIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE RULE-MAKING
Lecturer: Justice RICARDO P. GALVEZ, Former Solicitor General

Thursday, 6 December; 3:30 — 5:30 p.m.
Topic: EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE IN QUASI-JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS
Lecturer: Prof. BARTOLOME C. FERNANDEZ, University of the Philippines College of Law

Friday, 7 December 2001; 1:30 — 5:00 p.m.
Topic: MASS ACTION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (Negotiation, Organization, Legal Basis, Nature and Form, Acceptable Grounds, Sanctions and Penalties, Limitations)
Lecturer: Atty. ABELARDO L. APORTADERA, JR., Valdez Aportadera Maulit Law Offices

Saturday, 8 December; 8:00 — 12:00 noon
Topic: COMPENSATION OF PUBLIC OFFICERS: Problems and Issues
Lecturer: Prof. SAMILO N. BARLONGAY, University of the Philippines College of Law

REGISTRATION FEE: P1,200.00 *(MCLE Accredited)*
For Details: Pls. call 9297137/4349531

RP fishers may soon fish in Indon waters

BY TJ BURGONIO

FILIPINO fishermen will soon be able to fish in Indonesian waters rich in tuna.

Philippine and Indonesian officials have signed a memorandum of understanding on fisheries that would give local fishermen access to the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of Indonesia, Agriculture Undersecretary Cesar Drilon said.

Drilon said he would meet with his Indonesian counterpart in Thailand next week to push for the signing of a bilateral agreement on fishing before Dec. 16, when Indonesian authorities start banning foreign vessels from its waters.

"We're going into details so that before Dec. 16 a bilateral agreement could be signed between the Philippines and Indonesia allowing our fishermen to fish in Indonesia's EEZ," he said.

Drilon stressed the bilateral agreement would be highly advantageous to the Philippines, because Indonesia's EEZ "is rich in tuna and tuna-like species."

The Philippines exports tuna to Japan.

The MOU was inked between Ambassador to Indonesia Leonides Caday and fisheries officials in Indonesia last week. Present at the signing were Drilon and commercial fishing operators from the Philippines.

Drilon said local fishermen would benefit more than the Indonesians from the agreement.

40 Muslim soldiers go Awol

ZAMBOANGA CITY—About 40 Filipino Muslim soldiers have taken unauthorized leave to mark the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, the military said yesterday.

The Muslim troops decamped from the Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion in Basilan on Saturday, taking their guns with them, the Southern Command said in a report.

The soldiers, themselves former Moro guerrillas who were integrated into the armed forces after a 1996 peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front, are part of a 5,000-strong military task force pursuing the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping group.

Southcom chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu declared last week that there would be no letup in the campaign against the Abu Sayyaf despite the onset of Ramadan, which started at the weekend.

The task force is receiving military advice and training from US advisers, who arrived in the country early this month to help the Philippine government track down the allies of Saudi-born extremist Osama bin Laden, the main suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

The Abu Sayyaf is holding hostage a US Christian missionary couple and a Filipino nurse. Seven other Filipino hostages were recovered by the military last week. *AFP*

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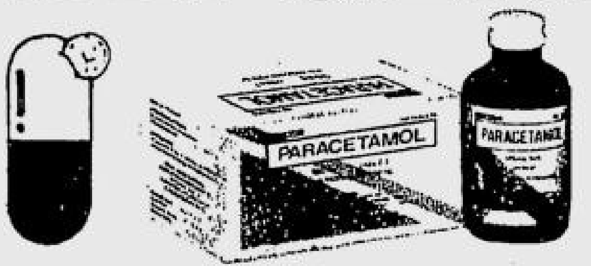

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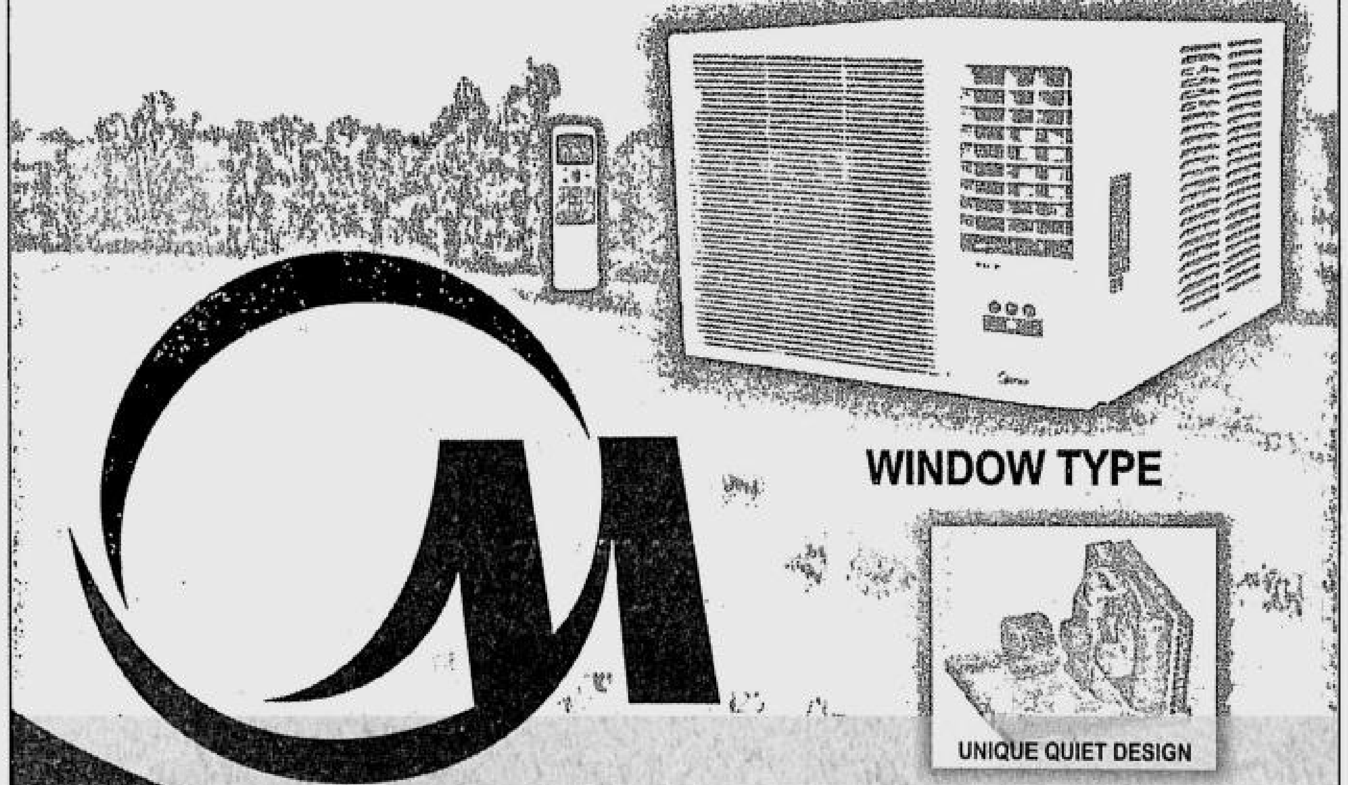

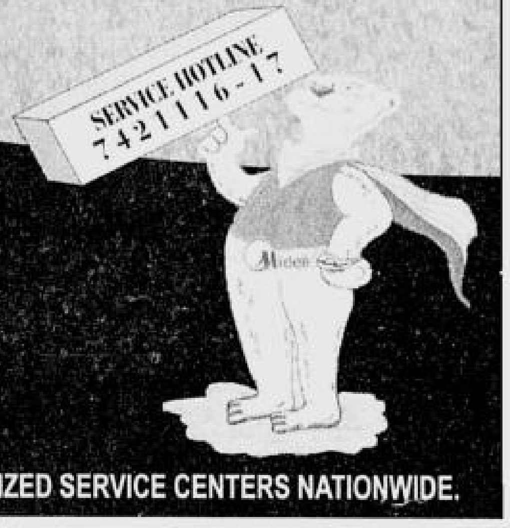

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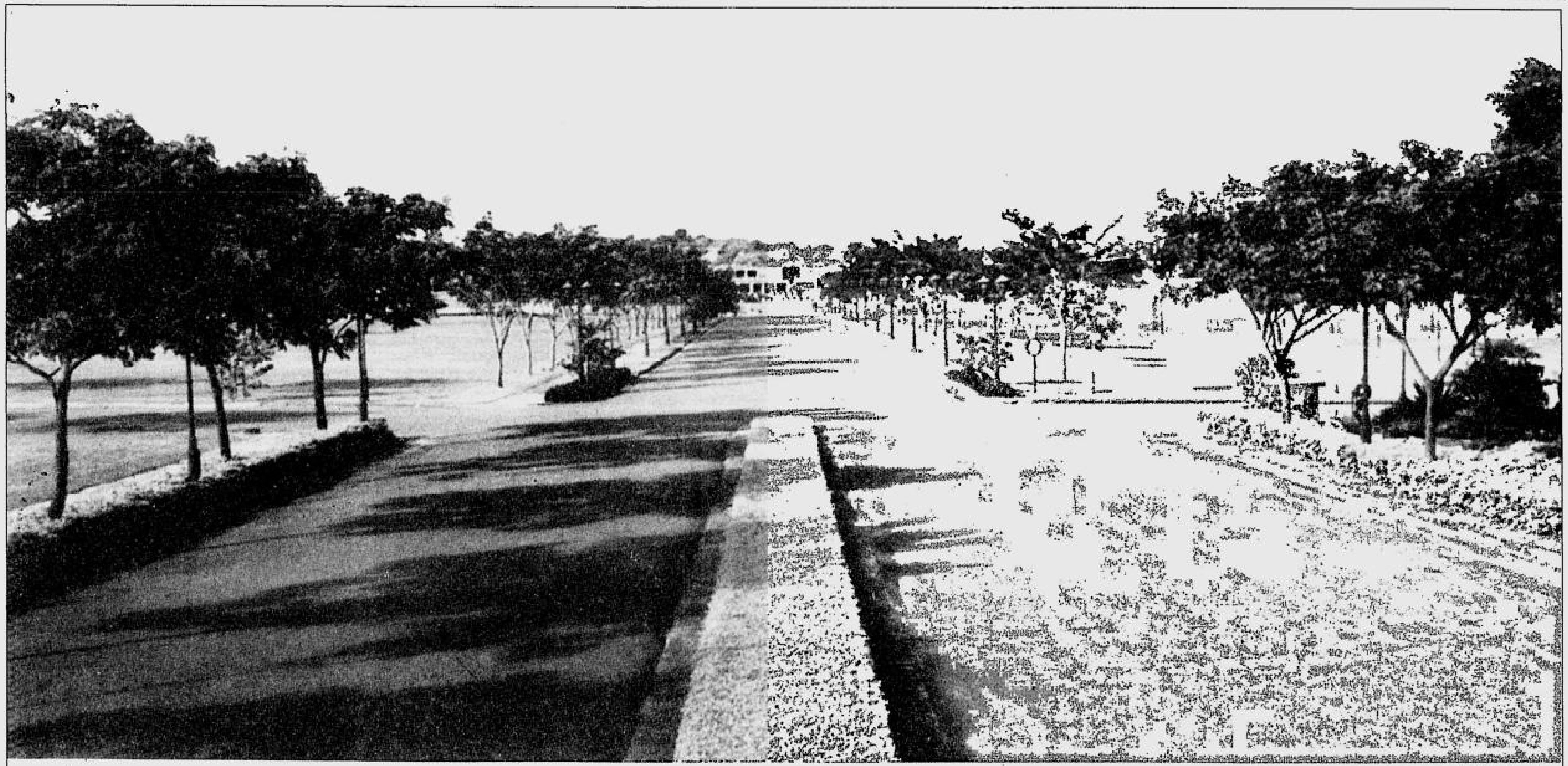
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Chavez lashes back at Palace

FORMER Solicitor General Francisco Chavez yesterday hit Malacañang for not moving to recover the Irene Araneta accounts despite evidence that she has deposits at the Union Bank of Switzerland.

Chavez, who recently resigned as special counsel of the Department of Justice in the recovery of the Marcos ill-gotten wealth, said that the Palace has a lot of explaining to do for its inaction on the Araneta accounts.

He also hit presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao for allegedly assigning wrong motives in his resignation.

"Malacañang should cease assigning untruthful and inexistent motives to me. What Malacañang should do is explain why there is no movement in the recovery effort of the I. Araneta account," he said. *Donna Cueto*

NIDA'S MURDER

'Lie tests' don't' count

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

POLYGRAPH, or lie detector tests, will not be enough to prove the innocence or guilt of witnesses and suspects being questioned in the killing of actress Nida Blanca.

The results of such tests are not admissible in court as evidence, Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police Task Force Marsha, said yesterday.

"Polygraph tests are done only to assist investigators in determining if a witness or suspect is telling the truth or not," Espina said.

After administering the test, the investigator must still find strong evidence to prove that the witness or suspect was lying.

"Investigators cannot just tell the court that this person is lying based on the polygraph test. They have to prove it," Espina said.

In the same way, a person passing a polygraph test will not necessarily be cleared by investigators.

A close friend and neighbor of Blanca, Candelaria "Dingding" Tantoco, has reportedly told the National Bureau of Investigation that she would submit to a polygraph test today either at the NBI or Camp Crame.

According to persistent but unconfirmed reports, Tantoco was one of the last individuals to have been seen with Blanca before the actress was found dead inside her Nissan Sentra parked at the 6th floor of the Atlanta Center in Greenhills, San Juan last Nov. 7.

But Tantoco, one of the 24 "witnesses" in the case, has denied having seen the actress, claiming that she was at home at the time Blanca went missing after 5 p.m. on Nov. 6.

Tantoco reportedly decided to take the polygraph test to end speculations about her possible involvement. Earlier reports said she had driven for Blanca occasionally.

Espina said Blanca's driver, Tony Borja, has yet to take a polygraph examination.

Borja, who came under suspicion after his thumbprint was lifted off the rear view mirror of Blanca's Sentra, has said he would be willing to take a lie detector test.

Asked if all 24 witnesses would be subjected to a polygraph examination, Espina said the testing must be voluntary.

He said a witness might refuse to be subjected to a polygraph test and this cannot be used against him or her.

The Task Force Marsha held a case conference yesterday morning to assess what has been gathered and set the direction of the investigation for next week.

"We are rechecking and reviewing the evidence and testimonies that have been gathered," Espina said.

PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza earlier said investigators have pinpointed some suspects who are now under surveillance in case they try to flee the country.

Investigators have established that personal grudge was the motive for the killing.

'Confidentiality rule is sacred,' says Loren

SENATE Majority Leader Loren Legarda expressed yesterday her support for the right of journalists to protect their sources in controversial stories involving members of Congress.

This after the House ethics committee ruled recently that the reporter of an English tabloid could not be compelled to reveal the sources of her news report that named five congressmen as members of the "Gang of Five."

"Lawmakers who feel aggrieved by adverse news reports quoting unnamed sources have other remedies available under the law. They could, for instance, file a criminal complaint for libel," Legarda said in a statement.

Legarda is currently with President Macapagal-Arroyo's delegation on a state visit to the United States.

Legarda, who continues to practice her profession as a television journalist, was reacting to a recent House ethics panel ruling that People's Tonight reporter Tita Valderama could not be forced to reveal the sources for her story about the Gang of Five.

Valderama had written that the five members of the "gang" had asked for P2 million each from Smart and Globe telecommunications companies in exchange for their silence during a congressional hearing on the firms' decision to cut the number of free text messages.

"We simply cannot compel journalists to reveal the identities of their sources who give information to them in confidence. The confidentiality rule here is sacred," Legarda said.

Southern Leyte Rep. Aniceto Saludo, one of those tagged as a Gang of Five member, had demanded Valderama's arrest for refusing to divulge the names of her sources—reportedly two senior House leaders who had provided her with information about the alleged activities of the five congressmen.

Ethics committee chair Isabela Rep. Antonio Abaya struck down Saludo's request, saying the panel could not compel Valderama to reveal the identities of her sources.

Gov't told: Make marriages work, don't break them

By Alcuin Papa

GROUPS opposing the passage of a divorce law yesterday said government should focus its efforts on making marriages work through counseling rather than legalize ways to break unions apart.

The Alliance for the Family Foundation Phils. Inc. (Alfi) yesterday asked Congress, the Senate and the Macapagal-Arroyo administration to trash a number of bills pending in Congress to legalize divorce and to overhaul the government's population education program.

"Does the government have any programs to help marriages? It should support marriage counseling for troubled marriages and address the reasons why couples separate. Before we can legalize separation, let's do something to help marriages," Alfi's Manny Arejola said at a forum on the divorce bill in Muntinlupa City.

Good citizens

He said there should be efforts "to maintain the family and give it value because only good families produce good citizens. We are fighting the legalization of divorce because an intact family is the only hope of society."

Alfi said it was closely watching developments, on Senate Bill 782 and House Bill 878 sponsored by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and Rep. Bella Angara-Castillo, respectively.

Both bills seek to amend the Family Code to allow for separation and remarriage.

Another measure, House Bill 2672 sponsored by Rep. Belma Cabilao, proposes the concept of "absolute separation" with the right to remarry. All three bills are divorce bills, Alfi said.

"We believe divorce legislation is unnecessary for those seeking relief from excessive difficulties and hardships of a failed marriage. Legal separation already provides for this relief. In truth, the bills' primary purpose is to grant the right to remarry. We believe this will damage irrevocably the institution of marriage and have disastrous consequences on the family," a statement from Alfi said.

Legal recourse

While the group said it sympathized with individuals trapped in "dehumanizing marriages" and agreed that such individuals should have legal recourse, it stressed that "true compassion lies in supporting marriage and the dreams of the youth for secure, lifelong commitments."

Alfi said counseling for troubled marriages should not be the concern of the private sector alone but of the government as well.

It recommends assistance for couples finding themselves unprepared for the responsibilities and difficulties of marriage.

Parañaque City Rep. Ed Zialcita assured Alfi that the three bills "don't stand a chance" of being passed.

Zialcita said that while Congress was "preoccupied" with more important measures, the group should watch out for bills which are "camouflaged" as divorce bills as well as other "anti-family" bills that would legalize same-sex marriages and abortion. Arejola said Alfi and other anti-divorce groups have been "systematically excluded from the hearings."

"It looks like they are railroading the bills," he said.

Last July, President Macapagal-Arroyo said she was opposed to the divorce as it would "weaken the family and erode society."

Anti-family

Filipina Ranada, of Pro-Life Philippines also said the government must overhaul its current population education program, which she said was anti-family.

"Population education is a package of values that make children more aware of population control. But the modules in use since 1993 actually encourages children to accept divorce and homosexuality," she said.

Both Ranada and Arejola agree that teaching population and sex education in schools was "illegal" and must be abolished. Arejola also pointed out that the current population education program and the legislation of the divorce bill is "the agenda of the UN and other agencies that the government is already implementing."

"The attacks on the family is systematic. It's already in the schools. And abortion is already the *de facto* population control policy of the government," said Arejola. Arejola said there was actually no need for population control because "there is no population problem in the world."

"We are marching towards extinction already. Do we need population control in the first place?"

He claimed that population control was "big business" and that population control programs being propagated by the UN favor companies that manufacture contraceptives.

Icamina, former mayor of Kalibo, dies at 90

DR. Federico Oreta Icamina died on Nov. 10, 2001 in Kalibo, Aklan at the age of 90. Interment will be on Nov. 24.

Born on Oct. 9, 1911, the former mayor of Kalibo City (1960-1980) was a major in the USAFFE Medical Corps during World War II and was a veteran of the siege of Corregidor; the Bataan Death March; the sinking of the SS Corregidor; and the guerrilla campaign of Brig. Gen. Macario Peralta in Panay.

Married to Dr. Florentina Raz Menez, he is survived by children Peter, Dora, Katherine, Karen and Krissele; Philip, Tessie, Anna Margarita, Anna Karenina and Maurito; Patrick; and Paul, Nenette, Iza, Paulo, Martin and Therese.

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HK gov't may cut foreign maids' pay

HONG KONG—Amid soaring unemployment and rounds of pay cuts and layoffs in the city, a top Hong Kong official said Sunday that the government may lower minimum monthly wages for foreign maids when it finishes a review early next year.

Secretary for Education and Manpower Fanny Law said on local network ATV that the bureau is conducting an annual review of foreign maids' salaries and an announcement would be made early next year.

Asked by reporters whether the government planned to slash minimum pay for foreign maids, Law said: "If salaries in Hong Kong slide on the whole, of course there is a chance wages would be lowered."

But a bureau spokeswoman, Yvonne Ng, said no decision has yet been made and that the government would consider different factors, including the consumer price index and wage trends, before making an announcement late January.

Back in 1999, the government cut monthly minimum salaries of foreign domestic workers for the first time by 5 percent as Hong Kong plunged into a deep recession after the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis. Their pay was cut from HK$3,860 to the current salary of HK$3,670.

About 180,000 Filipino maids work in Hong Kong, while a small percentage of domestic helpers come from Thailand, Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Dolores Balladares, vice chairwoman of United Filipinos in Hong Kong, strongly opposed the possible cut and criticized it as "discriminatory."

"We're very disappointed and upset about it for the very reason that our salary is the lowest here in Hong Kong," she said.

Hong Kong's unemployment rate is tipped to rise further after it soared to 5.3 percent for the three months ending Sept. 30. The government will release the latest figures on Monday. *AP*

Church unhappy with GMA stand on gambling

PRESIDENT Macapagal: Church has not lost hope

ROMAN Catholic Church leaders are disappointed with President Macapagal-Arroyo's apparent failure to curb illegal gambling, a Church spokesman said yesterday.

"There is some disappointment, but we have not lost hope," Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines spokesman Monsignor Hernando Coronel said on Catholic station Radio Veritas.

The bishops helped the opposition bring impeachment charges against Ms Macapagal's predecessor Joseph Estrada, who was toppled in a bloodless popular revolt January.

Estrada was arrested in April and was put on trial on charges of massive corruption. The charges include allegations that he took kickbacks from operators of an illegal lottery called "jueteng."

The bishops spoke out after Sen. Ramon Revilla announced that he would file a bill that would seek to make the underground lottery legal.

Revilla said legalizing the vice would remove its corrupting influence on police and local officials.

Gambling has "poisoned even the mind of a president," Coronel said, referring to Estrada. "It has evil effects."

He urged Ms Macapagal to take steps to rid the country of the illegal numbers racket as part of the largely Catholic nation's moral recovery.

"We must continue the fight against jueteng and all forms of gambling," he said. *AFP*

Increase 'Pera' of gov't workers to ₱2,000—senator

THE PERSONAL Economic Relief Allowance (Pera) of government employees should be doubled to P2,000 to help them cope with the rising prices of basic commodities, Sen. Francis Pangilinan said yesterday.

In a statement, Pangilinan said that it was "about time that the 1.5 million government workers' Pera be increased with the shrinking basket of goods that their money can buy."

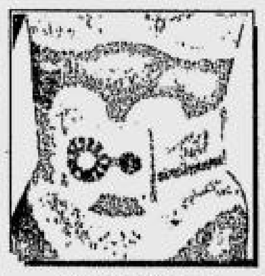
"This should also motivate them to perform their duties and deliver services more efficiently," Pangilinan said.

As it is, government employees get P1,000 each in Pera which is a government subsidy to temporarily assist them in coping with the skyrocketing prices of commodities brought about by economic crisis.

The granting of the Pera started in 1990 during the Middle East crisis and the series of oil price increases.

Pangilinan said that there is no better time to double the Pera than now when "prices of commodities have doubled over the past seven years and when the purchasing power of the peso has eroded by more than 60 percent."

"It is imperative to immediately address the need to augment the earnings of the government workers by way of increasing the Pera from P1,000 to P2,000," Pangilinan said. *Rocky Nazareno*



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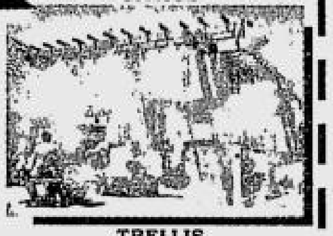

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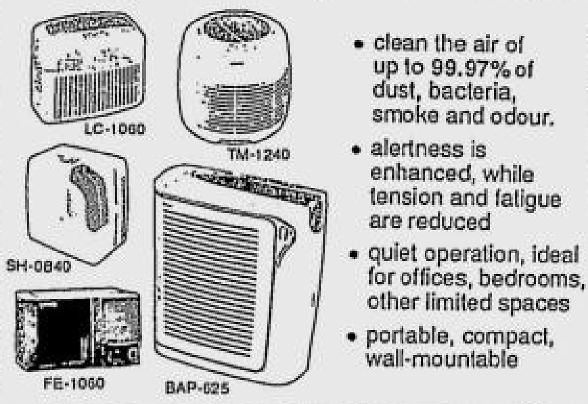

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OPINION

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Vol. 16 No. 344
ISSN 0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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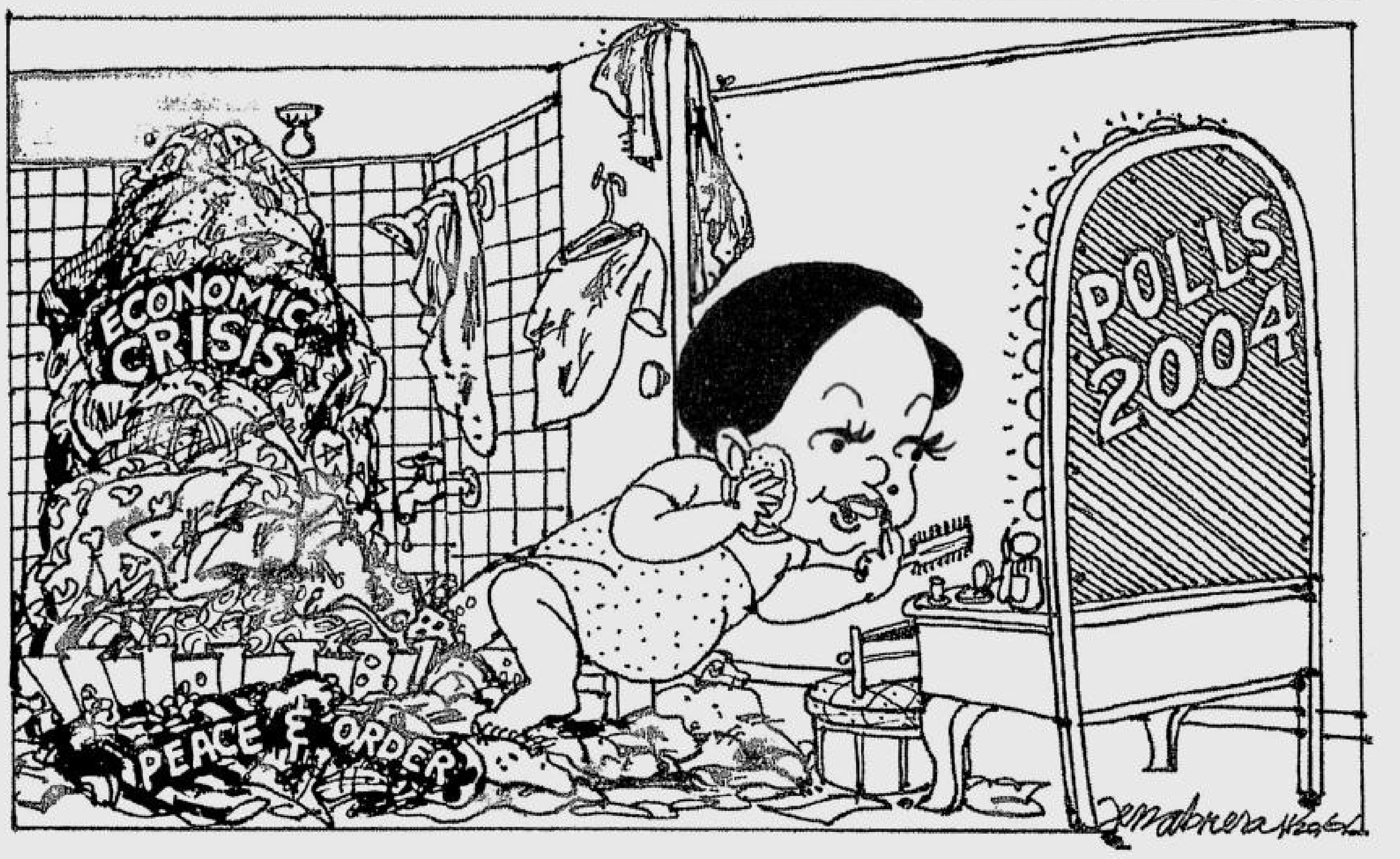

A lifeline

EDITORIAL

FOR A COUNTRY slowly sinking under the sheer weight of the politics of scandal, the Supreme Court's decision in the row between two Sandiganbayan justices is a veritable lifeline.

The decision itself is undramatic, and thus went largely unremarked. Last week, the Supreme Court ordered the anti-graft court's presiding justice, Francis Garchitorena, and the chair of its third division, Anacleto Badoy, to file the appropriate charges against each other within 48 hours of the decision.

Naturally, the order does not solve the sensational feud between Garchitorena and Badoy. But what it does is raise the level of the altercation to the legally actionable. It also serves to remind both scandal-prone public officials and a scandalized public that, in a country which follows democratic virtues and the rule of law, accusations both large and small are all subject to proof.

The row had started, or at the very least reached the public's notice, only two Sundays ago, when Badoy held a press briefing to accuse Garchitorena of pressing him to quit (or to go on leave, it really isn't clear) as chair of the division hearing the landmark plunder case against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

In reply, Garchitorena accused Badoy of a basic unfitness for his office, making public the contents of his memorandum to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court detailing Badoy's alleged absenteeism and incompetence.

The Sandiganbayan, essentially a constitutional experiment to give anti-graft cases the judicial attention they deserve, sustained considerable damage at the precise time it was hearing the most important case ever filed before it. And the damage was wrought on the most basic level: the appearance of propriety, without which no court can fulfill its responsibilities. The very public exchange of intemperate words between two senior members of the judiciary only served to undermine public confidence, not so much in the individual character of the two judges, but in the anti-graft court itself as an institution.

To contain the damage, Chief Justice Davide followed a three-step process. He issued a gag order, which the two feuding justices complied with. He conducted a dialogue between Garchitorena and Badoy, with the two other members of the third division, Associate Justices Teresita Leonardo-De Castro and Ricardo Ilarde, in attendance. And then he referred the matter to a Supreme Court oversight committee, which eventually made the recommendation that the two justices file the appropriate charges.

This sober decision may not have struck the fancy of a public over-familiar with the excesses of hype. In some quarters, it was even received as a delaying tactic, a means to buy time for both the Supreme Court and the two judges at the center of the dispute.

But if we look closely enough, we should see that the high court's approach to the Sandiganbayan scandal is actually the right one. If one has cause to believe that a public official is acting or has acted illegally, then one must initiate the necessary and constitutionally mandated proceedings—administrative, judicial or (in rare cases) legislative—that will bring the wrongdoer to account.

In other words, there is already a process in place. And the value of the high tribunal's simple, straightforward decision lay precisely in its ability to remind us of this truth.

The laws in place require the aggrieved party, or the party who has knowledge of a public official's illegal acts, to support accusation with evidence. This requirement is not a limitation on the public's ability to seek redress or to counter the influence of powerful public officials. It is instead an expansion of every citizen's right to a good reputation.

To put it another way, whistleblowers must not use the resources of media as a substitute for the legal process. Judges have a higher responsibility to uphold this basic principle; they are, after all, the arbiters of evidence. But all citizens share in this responsibility.

In the context of unresolved or unsubstantiated political scandals, the high court's decision should remind us all over again that one man's word is not enough. Taking this reminder to heart will help pull the rug from under insufficiently supported accusations. All we need to do is to raise the question, "Have the appropriate charges been filed?" If the answer is No, then perhaps there is nothing there at all.

An interview with former President Estrada

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

FORMER PRESIDENT Estrada invited a group of 11 print and broadcast journalists to his suite at the Veterans Medical Center last Saturday for dinner and talk. It was an eye opener.

The way to his suite is not through the front entrance but through a dark side road to a wing of the hospital. There was a checkpoint at the corner leading to the driveway. We parked our vehicles there and walked to the side entrance where there were more soldiers checking visitors. Our names were logged, and all our cellphones were left at the door. We had to walk through a metal detector before finally gaining entrance to Erap's suite.

The former president greeted us warmly and, it seemed to me, happily. He was wearing a dark brown striped short-sleeved shirt, light gray pants, and brown soft leather slippers, probably the same ones he wore to the Sandiganbayan during his arraignment.

The receiving room was quite big, with leather sofas around a coffee table on one corner. A table was set on the opposite side and the buffet table with Japanese and Filipino dishes on another. There were a few tacky paintings, one an imitation Amorsolo of a rural scene, hanging on the walls. Off to one side was an anteroom with a sofa and chairs where a couple of Erap's grandchildren were playing. Beyond that was the kitchen. The bedroom where both Erap and Jinggoy sleep together was on the opposite side. Between them was the bathroom. Inside, it was evident that the poor water service has spared neither the hospital nor the presidential suite. There was a big plastic barrel of water with a dipper in the shower stall. The former president of the Philippines takes his bath by the *tabo* system.

The suite, Erap told us, was built for former President Elpidio Quirino. The glass windows are bulletproof. Nevertheless, the drapes are always drawn and the occupants cannot even look out.

Erap cannot even walk or stand outside for some fresh air and sunshine. Condemned criminals in Muntinlupa are allowed at least one hour of exercise in the sun but not the former president of the country. The rule—and the drawn drapes and bulletproof windows—are obviously to protect him from potential snipers. Nevertheless, it must be lonely and boring to be confined in that suite day after day.

It is a good time to catch up on one's reading or to write, but obviously, Erap does not like reading (I did not see any book in the room). Neither does he intend to write his memoirs, as far as I can see. One can watch television only so much so the hours must be very long for Erap. So he is happy to have visitors.

His former Cabinet members—those still loyal to him—visit him, he said, and the economists brief him on the deteriorating state of the Philippine economy. Other friends also visit, he said, but not those whom he helped and who benefited from his administration. (Maybe they're busy preparing their defenses in the court cases against them.)

"Are we better off now than when I was president?" he asked. "Is peace and order better now than before? Do the poor have more roofs over their heads now; do they have more to eat? How much is the cost of *galunggong* now?" he added, echoing the campaign question of Cory Aquino.

The former president said he focused on "the three Ps" during his short-lived term: *pagkain* (food), *pabahay* (housing) and peace and order. Agricultural production rose during his term, he said.

"The bigger crops they're harvesting now, were the result of Ed's (then Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara) efforts," he pointed out. Economic performance, the dollar reserves and the peso exchange rate were all better then. "That's a matter of record; it cannot be denied."

"But the economic depression is not only here," I protested. "It is worldwide, worsened by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C."

"But the better-managed economies are suffering less," he replied. "And we are among the worst sufferers. What does that say?"

The kidnappings are much worse now, he cited the obvious, and *jueteng* is back with a vengeance. The problem in Mindanao is nowhere near a solution, in spite of the enormous expenses and the deaths of many soldiers.

All these sound like sourgraping, but figures don't lie. We are indeed worse off now than when Erap was at the helm. This is not to say that he was a better president. It is to say that the change of presidents did not result in better times for us. On the contrary, the times are worse now although it is hard to say how we would have fared had Erap not been removed.

"When I was still the president-elect," Erap related, "I was interviewed by a reporter of a foreign publication.

"He asked me: 'How will you run your country when you are a college dropout and your experience is only that of a small-town mayor?'

"I lectured him on good manners, then I answered his question. It is true I'm a college dropout and was only a small-town mayor, but I will run the whole nation with common sense. And that is what I have done. I used common sense in my decisions."

What is Erap's views on *jueteng* and on presidents having more than one wife? Who were the best and poorest performers in his Cabinet? What does he think the future holds for him? How does he answer the charges against him? If he is acquitted, will he run again?

His view on those will be told in tomorrow's column.

* * *

Comments are welcome at asiseeit@pacific.net.ph

Dark victory

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IS it a great day that the Kabul has been liberated from the Talibans?

Yes and no.

The yes of course is obvious. The Talibans were tyrannical rulers, and one can imagine the feeling of euphoria that comes from being liberated from their fanatical laws. The euphoria we ourselves felt from being freed from martial law is probably nothing compared to it. This is pure and unadulterated joy, such as one may feel from being plucked from the waters after thrashing about and nearly drowning.

The images of Afghans dancing in the streets of Kabul after the Northern Alliance forces captured it are tremendously spontaneous. Never has shaving a beard—wearing one was inflexible law under the Talibans—taken on an aspect of blissful ecstasy: It could very well be an advertisement for Gillette. And to hear music after a long time, or for the first time for the kids and youth—music was banned by the Talibans, who took it to be an assault on Allah's ears—that must feel like sighting water in the desert. The newspapers reported a rush to rent videotapes, which were of course banned as well, and which seemed to have materialized out of nowhere. Before the Talibans came to power, according to one magazine, the Afghans liked watching movies with women doing a lot of jiggling of their behinds. Well, different peoples, different wiggles.

There is no doubt about the liberation of Kabul being a joyful day for its residents. Or for most Afghans. But there is a downside to it. It has to do with the process by which Kabul was liberated from the Talibans.

At the very least, for all its euphoric results, none of it justifies the American campaign against Afghanistan, especially the bombing of Kabul and Kandahar, to bring Osama bin Laden to justice. Lest we forget, the American campaign against the Talibans was *not* meant to liberate the Afghans from the clutches of the Talibans. It was meant to liberate civilization from the clutches of one Bin Laden. That is a crucial point. There is a monumental difference between the two.

If the campaign against the Talibans *were* meant to liberate the Afghans from them, then it sets a very dangerous precedent for the conduct of world affairs in the 21st century. It negates completely a cardinal principle in diplomacy the world has stood by for a long time, and which the United Nations holds sacred, which is that no nation may interfere in the affairs of another nation for whatever reason.

That is why I've always protested the tack taken by George W. Bush and Tony Blair of depicting the Talibans as religious freaks who are cruel to their women as a way of dredging up support for their cause. No, more than that, as a moral boost, if not explicit justification, for their decision to bomb Afghanistan. Of course the Talibans are religious freaks who are cruel to their women, as the women's groups have been pointing out for a long time and sounding like voices in the wilderness. Without eliciting so much as a squeak from the burning Bush until a group of terrorists crashed several planes into the heart of America. The Talibans are a bunch of savages, true, but why should that justify any country taking action against them?

To imagine that the liberation of Kabul, and the incontrovertible euphoria it has brought its residents, justifies the American campaign against the Talibans is to throw us back to the days of Manifest Destiny and the White Man's Burden. It is to agree that a presumably civilized country has the right—or burden, what conceit!—to occupy, annex, or take action against a country that is presumably not so. I do not know that civilization, which is what the campaign in Afghanistan is meant to save, can survive another bout with these uncivil presumptions.

But more than this, the bigger question is what happens to a country that is "liberated" in this way. The world frowns on one country interfering in the affairs of another even for the best of reasons for one very good reason, which is that it brings no good. A tyranny that is ended from the outside, and not from the inside—by the resistance of the ruled and by tyranny's collapse from its own weight—does not bring a benign order, it brings another tyranny.

That should be obvious from America's previous intervention, which brought the Talibans to power. An intervention that, as we know now from Zbiegniew Brzezinsky, Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, was not a response to a Soviet occupation of Afghanistan but an enticement to a Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The dancing in the streets that attended the end of Soviet-backed rule in Kabul could also be heard far and wide. Though not by the former leaders who hanged from posts, their balls cut and stuffed into their mouths, courtesy of the victorious, American-backed Talibans. The end of that tyranny did not bring a benign order, it brought—well, the United States now calls it a threat to civilization.

This early, the signs of a long winter for the country are showing. The Northern Alliance, a disparate group of several factions, who are united in their detestation of Bin Laden and not in their admiration for one another, have refused to follow Bush's orders for them not to enter Kabul. Bush might as well have bid the waves hold still. To say that the situation there is volatile is to say that fissionable elements are volatile. Already, amid the shouts of joy, many Afghans fear the bloodbath to follow, as happened in the past when the Talibans won. I don't know why we call playing Russian roulette with the lives of people saving civilization.

Well may the Afghans throw themselves into the arms of revelry while they can. In time, they may find out that they've lost more than their beards.

RP taipans investing in China

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AT THE DINNER Justice Secretary Hernando Perez hosted for a few media women, we found him cautious and guarded in his responses, even though some of us had known him for quite a while now. For instance, the media women were curious about the alleged foreign bank accounts of Sen. Panfilo Lacson which AFP intelligence chief Victor Corpuz had raised some months ago. Is the government still working on it? Perez would only go as far as to hint that the case is still very much around and that they are working on it, though I noted that NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco was more categorical in asserting that there has been confirmation from the United States about them. Perez opined, however, that the strongest case at this point against Lacson is still the Kuratong Baleleng case. Will Lacson go to jail for it? Again, he cautiously stressed that it's under review by the Supreme Court.

* * *

At some point I wondered, if Perez is this cautious about his responses to the media whom he had known from way back, why is he being accused of having accepted a $2-million bribe in exchange for a "hasty" favorable opinion on the Government Acknowledgment and Consent Agreement (Gaca) on the Napocor's contract with the Argentine firm Impsa? He denies accepting a bribe, arguing that any document purporting to show a deposit in his name has to be fake. Contrary to his detractors' assertion that his memo backed up the "sovereign guarantee" for the Impsa loan, Perez stressed that his memo was merely a "comfort letter" designed to assure the requesting creditor banks that the government shall do all it can to make the Napocor comply with its obligations.

In my research, I found that the original Gaca was signed by Estrada Finance Secretary Jose Pardo on Dec. 18, 2000; a month later, on Jan. 18, 2001, as the nation was embroiled in Edsa II, Neda chief Ben Diokno certified that all documents pertinent to Gaca have already been approved by the Neda Board. Estrada's Justice Secretary Artemio Tuquero was supposed to have rendered another opinion upholding Pardo's Gaca as valid, but he never got around to signing it primarily because Sen. Serge Osmeña had threatened to lambaste his move as validating an anomalous project. It was said that the lenders were ready to release some $160 million despite the political turmoil then, and they were frantic to have Tuquero issue that affirmation of the Gaca; but doubtless realizing that the Erap regime was fast being overtaken by events, he opted to "leave it to the next government to take care of."

* * *

The Gaca found its way to new Justice Secretary Perez who sought the opinion of the Office of the Chief State Counsel, new Justice Undersecretary Manuel Teehankee and new Neda chief Dante Canlas. He stressed that it was only after having the documents reviewed and evaluated by those offices that he prepared his opinion affirming the validity and legality of Pardo's Gaca. Perez claimed he was cautious enough, but some Commission on Appointments members who, curiously, were pushing for the Impsa project in the Erap regime, now are waiting to crucify him on the same issue (the only consistent oppositor has been Serge Osmeña, but he is being accused of pushing the interest of Impsa's only rival bidder, an Australian group tied up with the Lopez group to which his wife Bettina belongs). The question being asked is, is Perez being crucified because of his various roles in defending this administration?

* * *

In China I noted that the Chinese-Filipino taipans have been investing in the country of their roots. Metrobank chair George S.K. Ty recently inaugurated his bank's branch in Shanghai with no less than President Macapagal, who was then attending the Apec summit in that city, as his guest of honor and a high-powered delegation from Manila to witness the event. On the other hand, as our group drove southward along the eastern coast of China from Fu Zhou City, the capital of Fujian province, we saw the two big SM malls recently built in Jin Jiang City and Xiamen by Henry Sy, which hope to capture the lead in the mall business in Fujian with its 34 million people. Sy, whose fortune began in a small store in Rizal Avenue in the '50s, has built 12 SM malls all over the Philippines.

Lucio Tan, who inaugurated his bank, Xiamen Commercial Bank, in Xiamen City during the visit of former President Estrada two years ago, will open another branch in Chungcheng in Szechuan province. Tan has invested in a lot of property in Xiamen, primarily the International Finance Center, its tallest and the only one with a helipad in this progressive city. John Gokongwei has a tall apartment building there too, while Chinese-Filipino Chamber of Commerce president Ben Chua owns the Fil-Chino Building that contains plush condos; John Ng has a steel plant in Fu Zhou.

Interestingly, the majority of the taipans mentioned above, as well as philanthropist James Dy, Dewey Dee and Dante Go, are all from the Fujian area where the feng shui is said to be good for business.

* * *

At the gathering with the Filipino community in Beijing some weeks back, President Macapagal sat with three Filipinos who have stayed in China for 30 years: Jimmy FlorCruz, Chito Sta. Romana and Eric Baculinao. They were young students on a visit to China when the Plaza Miranda bombing occurred in 1971; when Marcos started arresting their colleagues back home, they decided to hide in China, and never left. Ms Macapagal paid tribute to their successful careers there (all journalists, FlorCruz is Beijing bureau chief of CNN while the other two are with other American broadcasting companies), but she also picked up from them the idea of "holiday economics."

The journalists pointed out to her that China has encouraged domestic tourism by expanding three major holidays: the Chinese National Day in October, Labor Day on May 1 and the Chinese New Year between January and February. I checked this out with Consul Noel Fernandez of the Philippine Embassy in Beijing and he noted that the Chinese government's aim in giving the people long holidays is to flush out their huge $1 trillion savings, now sleeping in banks and in their version of the *tampipi* at home. Fernandez pointed out that domestic tourism in China draws about 60 million domestic tourists, as against 20 million foreign tourists.

Upon her return from China, Ms Macapagal immediately expanded the All Saints' Day observance into a five-day holiday and local tourism got a big shot in the arm. This has encouraged the President to make a similar expanded break in between Christmas and New Year. To my mind, however, we cannot have this too often, as the people don't have that much spare money, especially after all the Christmas shopping and feasting; we don't have the kind of savings the Chinese have. In addition, long breaks would send the wrong signals to our already happy-go-lucky people, when what we need to emphasize is the need for hard work.

Ramadan: making do with less

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Datu Amir Baraguir

> The spirit of Ramadan ought to be one of sacrifice, of savoring the opportunity to suffer in fulfillment of God's will

TODAY, Muslims all over the world are in their third or fourth day of fasting. In the Philippines, the pious (or those who pretend being so) among the estimated 7 million Muslim Filipinos will abstain from—among other things—food, water and sex from dawn till dusk for the whole 29 or 30 days of the Islamic month of Ramadan.

What has been perplexing me since I took my faith seriously a couple of decades ago is the tendency of many of my compatriots to increase their gross food intake during the month and request for more privileges from their schools or offices.

Even those who have very modest budgets prior to the fasting month try to look for other sources of income in order to augment their Ramadan funds.

Families that were previously content with rice and a viand or two for every meal suddenly develop an inordinate craving for cake, ice cream and other "special" food. Thus, one comes across allegedly indigent religious persons begging for cash assistance "to prepare for fasting." It takes a lot of tact to refrain from asking them why it is more expensive to go hungry than eat your fill.

Some students and office workers are not less guilty. Some government employees once approached me for what I think was a religious equivalent of intellectual dishonesty. They were asking my help to draft a petition requesting shorter office hours throughout the fasting month. Do they want to pass on the burden of their religious duties to their office? Can they accept the prospect of their office in their stead going to heaven? By demanding privileges as an adjunct to performance of Islamic rituals, these Muslims are also sending the wrong signals that it is hard to be a Muslim.

The spirit of Ramadan ought to be one of sacrifice, of savoring the opportunity to suffer in fulfillment of God's will. It would therefore seem paradoxical to find Muslims asking for more, rather than being content with less during this blessed month. The reason why those who are better off in life are obliged by God to share their material blessings during this month is the expectation that going hungry for 30 days will somehow produce some surplus. Certainly, the poor are allowed to accept gifts from the rich, if only to give the latter an opportunity to develop their spirit of charity and altruism. But all in all, the month-long fasting is meant to annihilate all vestiges of selfishness and greed.

Greed and discontent are the main sources of trouble everywhere. They are the main roots of conflict. Capitalists wanting more profit overshoot their limit in exploiting their workers. Politicians desiring more power and pelf deprive their constituents of basic government services. Revolutionaries longing for more territory and clout dominate the people whose interests they claim to defend and destabilize states they consider villains. Discontented laborers foment industrial unrest, deprived citizens espouse political dissent, dominated peoples resist. All these amount to violence.

Conflicting interests and desires can begin to be mitigated if some of the people commit themselves to a life of contentment. Violence will begin to end when all succeed in eliminating greed from their system. This is what Ramadan seeks to accomplish.

A blessed Ramadan to all pious servants of Allah!

Globalism and nationalism in a time of terror

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

I MISS the 20th century sometimes, the century in which we were born, but which we shall never visit again, except in dreams and history. It has gone to sleep with its World Wars and its Cold Wars, with its nuclear cataclysms, with its wars of national and sexual liberation, with its dictatorships of Left and Right, and all their banished, vanquished isms. It was the century in which the Philippines spent most of its life as a nation, and nationalism was the passion and common religion of its thinkers and patriots. The 20th century was a good century, as the good largely defeated the evil on all sides, even though it seemed to take forever, and that struggle still unfolds.

But in this new 21st century of terror, to which we must daily awake, we can only pray for a similar outcome. Terrorism and the war being waged upon it, have created a banquet of catastrophes for doomsayers, and a stream of ominous portents for pessimists. The unavoidable human tragedies of war, are seized upon by resenters of an imperfect and unjust world, as further evidence of the need to wallow in resentment, hatred, envy, anger, against whatever nation or nations hold power and wealth in the world.

Blaming former tormentors for our own failure to make something of this nation with its talented people, and this country with its rich resources, is a bad mental habit, an extension of the politics of resentment that dominates so much of Filipino expression. These are the futile emotions never unlearned from a national history of brilliant defeats, many of which we assiduously celebrate and revere on national holidays, like the ones later this month.

The Taliban and al-Qaida may now be on the run, but who knows what's strapped to Osama bin Laden's chest, or those of his wives and children, as they flee from the American harpies that pursue them? What final exit, what triumphant entrance to paradise, what singular martyrdom, does this particular madman have in mind for himself, considering he has vowed never to be captured alive and is a born billionaire? (May it be a quick incineration with little collateral damage, a small mercy in these too-interesting times)

Regardless of his ultimate fate, the world has been forever transformed, I think for the good, because Bin Laden has become the catalyst for an unprecedented coalition of countries that now includes the United States, United Kingdom, China, Russia, Japan, Germany and every major antagonist of the 20th century's many wars and epic conflicts.

He has united what used to be called the First World of the West and the Second World of Communism, leaving the Third World to fend for itself. He is responsible for Vladimir Putin's sudden discovery last week, and genuine appreciation, as noted by American newsmen, for the down-home American hospitality of Texas barbecues hosted by George W. Bush, and the resulting mutual reductions in strategic nuclear arsenals.

The Russian Bear and the American Eagle roam together, exchanging stories of Afghanistan.

Likewise, the entry of China into the World Trade Organization, presages the full blooming of US-style capitalism in the land that worships more money-gods per capita than any other civilization. China promises to be a billion-consumer shot in the world economic arm and a formidable economic competitor. Bin Laden has united the world and promoted globalization on a grand scale and accelerated schedule never envisioned by the architects of the WTO. If there is any doubt of China's definite turning to the West, it should have been dispelled by the perfectly serviceable diction of President Jiang Zemin, unexpectedly addressing the Apec conference of leaders in surprisingly capable English in Shanghai recently. So-called English-speaking countries like the Philippines, who've been remiss at keeping up English education anyway, should beware, lest all those customer care centers that Mar Roxas and Vince Perez have been selling the Americans and the President on, go to a suddenly more fluent China.

With Germany at the heart of the European Union, and Japan an equally reliable partner in Asia, the United States and United Kingdom lead a coalition that now also includes Russia and China and almost every other nation in the world. If such nations and peoples, who have waged such titanic wars upon each other and rivaled each other for world supremacy, can unite in a common cause, then perhaps there is less cause to be pessimistic than the Cassandras would like it portrayed. Perhaps the present crisis will crystallize a new consensus on global human society.

Like it or not, we are one human race on one indivisible planet. Why should there not be a single, global democracy? If all men are indeed created equal, with rights inalienable and natural to their persons, then why should they not all be citizens of a single nation, a single polity that encompasses the whole world? (We could even have just one money, and be done with a thousand miseries and financial crises.)

Something profound is happening, I think, as the whole world watches in horror and fascination the endlessly retelevised destruction of the World Trade Center, where virtually every race and nation lost a scion in the carnage. A new sentiment grows in the heart of modern humanity, a new conception takes root in the global mind, that what was destroyed was something that belonged not just to America but to the whole world, that what is threatened is not just a prosperous American present, but a possible and highly desirable future for the world of which America is merely the prototype.

This is something greater than narrow nationalism. It is a seed of good in this century, that perfects patriotism by applying "love of country" to the whole of mother earth and transcends nationalism by uniting all the races of Man into one human race. It is the idea of globalism, the concept of one world, one race, one democracy.

Choice of banner news

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

SEVERAL days back, two local events competed for attention on the INQUIRER's front page—the killing of veteran actress Nida Blanca and the death and destruction wrought by typhoon Nanang on the beautiful province of Camiguin.

The coverage of the investigation being conducted of Blanca's death continues, although with less publicity now. The miseries caused by the killer typhoon appear to be no longer on the priority list of the media.

A student from the University of the Philippines, Patricia de Leon, expressed disappointment with the newspaper's handling of the two incidents. She wrote:

"I do not see anything balanced with the way your newspaper treated two significant events that happened this week. It seems that for Philippine media, no exceptions here, the murder of one show-biz celebrity can outweigh in newsworthiness the death and displacement of hundreds of our brothers in Camiguin.

"Yes, Nida Blanca is an icon of the Philippine entertainment industry. I also understand that the Camiguin incident is harder to cover than something that happened in the metropolis. But that is no reason for the insensitivity media have shown the victims of the tropical storm.

"There is no logic behind making the murder of one celebrity headline material and relegating the deaths of hundreds under it. I appreciate that the next day the Camiguin incident appeared as the headline, but for me, the damage has already been done. I see your move as a poor reaction to broadcast media's and other public figures' handling of the issues."

Before I discuss the reader's letter, let me say that nothing warms my heart more as a columnist than to receive letters from young students expressing their views or concerns about the events in our society. It shows that there is a corps of young men and women out there who can be relied upon to take on the responsibilities of good citizenship when their elders (both responsible and irresponsible) move out of the scene.

Choice of news

I reacted the same way as the reader did when I first saw the banner headline of the INQUIRER's Nov. 8 issue. Spread out in big bold letters on the front page were the words "Nida Blanca stabbed dead." On top of the page, in less prominent print size, was the runner that read "Typhoon kills 57 in Camiguin, Visayas." The details of the latter news came out in the Across the Nation section on Page 12.

This arrangement struck me as odd. Why did the newspaper give premium treatment to the slaying of an actress and relegate to the background the most destructive typhoon ever to hit that part of the country? She is no Ninoy Aquino whose death deserves everything that the front page can give. I felt the choice of the banner news that day left much to be desired.

I brought to the attention of the editors the reader's letter during last Monday's regular editorial assessment meeting. There must be a reason for the editors' decision to make Blanca's death the most important piece of news for that particular issue.

This was the explanation given to me. The editors met in the afternoon of Nov. 7 for the usual story conference (this is the meeting among the editors to discuss what news and features will appear in the newspaper) for the next day's issue. The lineup of stories, or *lista* as it is fondly called, contained the standard 30 or so news capsules gathered by the editorial desk from its reporters in the field.

On top of the list was, as expected, the death of Blanca. Earlier that day, news about the discovery of her blood-soaked body was the subject of extensive radio and television coverage. Also on the list was the report that scores of people died or were injured in the wake of typhoon Nanang.

Due to the proximity of the news source, details about Blanca's gruesome murder were enormous. The police investigators made themselves available to the media. The office colleagues and friends of the late actress freely gave accounts of their last encounter with her. And, not to be outdone, the publicity-hungry politicians blabbered about the possible motives for the crime.

News dearth

But the scenario was different for the Camiguin tragedy. Outside of the sketchy reports on the number of people killed and houses destroyed that came from the National Red Cross and military officials, not much was known yet about the incident.

The dearth in news may be attributed to the inaccessibility of the island province from mainland Mindanao due to the storm. The media persons closest to the province were based in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Butuan. What's more, nobody expected the typhoon to hit that hard a place that hardly experiences heavy rains.

With scanty reports to go by on the destructive effects of the typhoon, the editors decided to feature instead on the front page Blanca's slaying. They considered it an event that called for full publicity as it gave credence, although denied by the police, that the peace and order situation in the metropolis has gone from bad to worse.

At the same time, however, the editors asked the correspondents based in Mindanao to get more details about the suffering the people of Camiguin went through. A photographer was dispatched to the place to capture on film the death and destruction the typhoon caused on the province.

The following days, as more reports and photos came in, the INQUIRER's front and inside pages gave the tragedy the treatment it rightfully deserved. Of late though, the event has been relegated to the background as other news of equal importance have assumed their right to be at the front page.

Based on the explanation given by the editors, I think the newspaper did not err in giving prominence to the death of Blanca in its Nov. 8 issue and focused on the Camiguin tragedy only in the succeeding editions.

Lotto numbers

A reader who introduced himself as a lotto aficionado called last week to ask why the INQUIRER does not publish the results of the lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. He said that due to the hard times, even the rich participate in these games of chance in the hope that they might hit the jackpot.

He complained that on top of paying P15 for the INQUIRER, he has to shell out extra cash to buy any other newspaper that carries the results of the lottery that many consider as the quickest way to get out of financial straits.

After checking with the editors, I learned that the PCSO used to have an advertising agreement with the newspaper to publish the results of lotto draws. Too bad, that arrangement was discontinued by the PCSO sometime in 1999 in the aftermath of the "advertising boycott" deposed President Estrada initiated against the INQUIRER. It will be recalled that the disgraced President tried, but failed, to bring the newspaper to its knees out of pique for its critical reports on his administration.

According to the editors, in the absence of a formal agreement with the PCSO, which should include a system for submitting the official report on the lotto results, the newspaper cannot give the information requested by the reader.

It is essential for the newspaper to get the lotto results from its authorized source only, otherwise it might find itself in serious trouble if it publishes the wrong numbers. The lessons of the Pepsi 349 fiasco are still too fresh to be forgotten.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

What rampant absenteeism means

FOR US, rank and file employees, absences, tardiness and undertime are such a "big deal," a no non-sense matter. We know by theory and experience that should we repeatedly incur absences, our agencies will surely pounce upon us with the usual administrative sanctions. This is true whether our duties are merely routinary or clerical and we can be easily substituted by other office workers.

In the government offices, absences for personal reasons are duly recorded and the corresponding number of days or hours we are absent are deducted from our leave credits, or their worth are taken from our meager salaries. Even absences due to health reasons are borne by the concerned employee for although such absences may be justified, it ultimately affects efficiency and performance. Public servants know that repeated poor performance would result in extreme sanctions like dismissal.

Thus, it greatly shocks us that elected lawmakers in Congress could hardly constitute a quorum due to habitual absenteeism. Worse, initial attendance could not be maintained because some of them "tiptoe" out of the session hall. A number of measures have been tried to curb these malpractices. Locking the session hall to prevent "great escapes" of the honorables,

threat of pork barrel deductions, publication of names and fines—these measures, however, have yet to be formalized.

The function of each congressman is vital and this cannot simply be relegated to another since his vote on a particular issue is the presumed decision of the people he represents. The rampant absenteeism in the House of Representatives merely shows political irresponsibility, a shame and a disgrace to the people who put their trust on these lawmakers.—**DANILO V. TAYONG, Villarica, Midsayap, Cotabato City**

LETTERS

Correct nomenclature

CONGRATULATIONS! Your Saturday Special editor, Nestor U. Torre, is the only arts and entertainment professional journalist who correctly calls the handlers of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," "The Weakest Link" and similar shows/segments in which the participants are asked to answer questions in order to win a prize, quiz masters, not hosts. All the award-giving bodies for television and other show-biz writers should take heed of Torre's differentiation and stop miscategorizing such programs as game shows/segments. I have called the attention of the standards committee of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, but it seems it has not taken any action as yet.

What determines the correct nomenclature of such programs is the final requirement proximate to winning the prize. Some shows require the participants to answer a question or a series of questions before being allowed to participate in a game leading to a chance to win a prize. Such shows/segments are correctly called game shows/segments. If the reverse is true, the show is accurately called a quiz show/segment. In such programs, the handler is rightly called quiz/game master (mistress), not host/hostesses.—**RAMON ALFONSO A. FUENTES, raaf@hotmail.com**

Nothing wrong with release of ₱470 M for rural electrification

THE COLUMN of Neal Cruz last Nov. 13, 2001 contained serious charges against me and other National Power Corp. officials pertaining to the P470-million funding for the O Ilaw program of the government.

Apparently, the column was written on the basis of information passed on to him by people who opted to hide behind anonymity. I wish I will be given the chance to air my side and clarify the many factual errors in that column.

First, I would like to assure the public that the transactions entered into by the Napocor regarding the release of the P470-million fund are aboveboard and transparent.

There was nothing extraordinary in the release of the funds as we were merely continuing the implementation of the energization project which was approved during the administration of President Joseph Estrada and Napocor president Federico Puno.

The Department of Energy, under then Secretary Mario Tiaoqui, launched O Ilaw as part of Estrada's Erap para sa Mahirap program. It aims to electrify all the barangays in the country by the year 2004.

Tiaoqui directed the Napocor and other DOE-attached agencies to participate in the energization project which had the National Electrification Administration as the lead implementing agency. Funds required for the implementation of the program would come from the participating agencies' budgets.

The Napocor board approved its commitment to the program in a meeting held on Oct. 16, 2001. The board also gave its go-signal to allot P1 billion to the project, 15 percent of which was to be released during the last quarter of 2000, 50 percent (equivalent to P500 million) to be disbursed this year, and the remaining 35 percent to be given next year.

As you know, government institutions usually do not disburse funds during the first two months because they wait for the final approval of their budget for the year. This year, our disbursements were also affected by the Commission on Elections resolution banning disbursement of funds during the campaign period, from March 30 to May 13. Thus, our disbursements for the first quarter were delayed.

On May 24, then Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho sent a memo directing the Napocor and the NEA to expedite the implementation of the O Ilaw program.

Since the money that would be released was merely the second tranche of the funds allotted for O Ilaw, the board which met last May 28 resolved that there was no need to issue another resolution.

The money was released not on May 28 as alleged but only after the memorandum of understanding between the Napocor and the NEA was notarized last May 31.

The new board which came in last June also passed a resolution last June 27 confirming, ratifying and approving the memorandum of understanding.

We strongly deny that the money was given to the legislators to speed up the passage of the Omnibus Power Bill. The P470 million was transferred to the NEA and was duly receipted. As of Oct. 29 this year, the NEA has disbursed P341.8 million for 125 rural electrification projects administered by 82 electric cooperatives throughout the country.

The balance of P128.2 million is earmarked for disbursement within the next two months for rural electrification projects that meet the NEA's evaluation criteria and in accordance with the government's disbursement regulations.

I would like to emphasize that my leadership remains committed to our vision of instituting reforms in the system and the power sector in general in the light of the restructuring of the power sector.—**JESUS N. ALCORDO, president, National Power Corp., Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City**

Osteoarthritic experts, equipment, care are available here

THE PHILIPPINE Orthopaedic Association, the national association of orthopaedic surgeons in the Philippines, through its board of trustees would like to clarify some issues printed in the newspapers on Nov. 7, 2001. This pertains to the capabilities and expertise of the Filipino orthopaedic surgeons and the availability of equipment in our major medical centers for the surgical treatment of degenerative osteoarthritis of the hip and knees.

We would like to assure the public that our organization with 358 active fellows has the capability and expertise to treat all kinds of orthopaedic problems. Most of our fellows, after their four-year residency training program, go for subspecialty fellowship training in prestigious medical centers in America, Europe and the Asia-Pacific rim. They have established links internationally and have constantly exchanged ideas, knowledge and expertise in the different fields such as joint replacement, spine, pediatric orthopaedics, orthopaedic trauma, sports injuries, hand and microvascular surgery and adult orthopaedics.

Our association has seven subspecialty affiliate societies, one of which is the Philippine Hip and Knee Society founded in 1991 by a group of renowned specialists headed by Prof. Ramon B. Gustilo, professor of orthopaedic surgery at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA and former chair of the Department of Orthopaedics, Heneppin County Medical Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. This organization started the evolution of excellent orthopaedic care of patients suffering from degenerative osteoarthritis and other related arthritic conditions of all major joints.

A number of medical centers and some government institutions have procured equipment appropriate for total hip and total knee replacements including pre and postoperative rehabilitation care by trained rehabilitation medicine specialists and medical management by competent Filipino rheumatologists.

Because of this improvement in the care of patients with arthritic hips and knees, an increasing number of our Filipino patients who can afford to go abroad for treatment have now availed of these excellent care by the multispecialty group of orthopaedic surgeons, rheumatologists and rehabilitation medicine specialists.

The answer is clear therefore, that total care of the arthritic patient is readily available in the Philippines. This includes availability of implants and instrumentations for total joint replacements, as marketed by one local firm and three other international orthopaedic companies through its distributors.

We hope that this will clear the air of doubt about the capability of the Filipino orthopaedic surgeons and their allied specialties to deliver excellent total care of their patient population suffering from arthritis and its related disorders. We however, do not take out the privilege and preferences of individual patients to choose their own physician and seek treatment here or abroad.—**LAURO M. ABRAHAN JR., MD, FPOA, FPCS, president, Philippine Orthopaedic Association Inc., Unit 810 Future Point Plaza 1 Condominium, 112 Panay Ave., Quezon City**

A tribute to 'Cocktales'

THIS refers to the Cocktales column of Vic Agustin last Nov. 14 where he expressed displeasure over the use of his comments in a full-page advertisement for the MIA-Naia Association of Service Operators (Maso).

We would like him to know that when we quoted a portion of his column, we did not mean to offend him, but rather pay tribute to him as one of the top opinion makers in the country.

Cocktales enjoys a huge following because of his credibility, fairness and the incisiveness of his treatise. It is for this reason that our client suggested that we include his views in the advertisement.—**ALFREDO REBILLON, executive PR consultant, Agatep Associates Inc., 1605 Equitable Tower, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City**

Actuarial studies and SSS pensions

THIS is in reference to the letter of Mansueto Chuan, which was published in the Oct. 1 issue of the INQUIRER. Chuan asked for an increase in his basic monthly pension.

Actuarial studies show that increasing the average monthly pension to P10,000 would deplete the funds and jeopardize the financial viability of the Social Security System.

The SSS pension is usually more than the amount of the member's total contributions. But it is designed to replace only part of the income lost after retirement.

Since 1973, the SSS has increased the minimum pension for a total of 14 times and has implemented 22 across-the-board increases ranging from 5 to 50 percent.

The SSS administers a social insurance program. The contributions of members are pooled. It adheres to the concept wherein the rich subsidize the poor, the healthy subsidize the sick and the young subsidize the old.

The SSS is exploring ways to improve its financial position to support benefit increases. It has intensified its collection efforts and rationalized its investment strategies to enhance its income and has optimized its use of resources to generate savings.

Rest assured, an increase would be considered after actuarial studies show an enhancement will be viable.—**JOEL P. PALACIOS, assistant vice president, Media Affairs Department, Social Security System, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**

Late veterans' old-age pensions

AS of this writing, the veteran-pensioners have not yet received their old age pensions for the month of October 2001. And if I remember right, the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office requested the Department of Budget and Management (some time in September this year) to release P120 million for old age pensions for the months of October, November and December 2001.

Why can't the DBM release on time the amounts needed by the PVAO for old age pensions when it can make available hundreds of millions of pesos for travel allowances of senators and congressmen who are now gallivanting abroad?

For the sake of these veterans who are now in their twilight years and are sickly, kindly release their old age pensions on time so they can use it to some advantage before their time is up.—**GODOFREDO O. PETEZA SR., district adjutant, Veterans Federation of the Philippines, Camarines Norte Veterans District, Daet, Camarines Norte**

Myanmar talks: Little progress after a year

NEWS ANALYSIS

Pascale Trouillaud

YANGON—The first anniversary of historic talks between Myanmar's junta and the democratic opposition aimed at "national reconciliation" passed unnoticed last month, and for a reason.

The dialogue, informed sources say, has more or less reached a standstill.

As people in Myanmar generally observe symbolic dates, it would have seemed likely that either the junta or Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) would have marked the anniversary of the talks that began in October 2000 with some kind of statement.

But apparently it was too soon to send a positive message. The two sides, previous arch-enemies who have agreed not to reveal anything about the substance of their talks, said nothing.

Diplomats say the most remarkable thing about the talks after one year is that they are still taking place.

"There has been no statement because there is a great deal of frustration...but they are still in contact," explained a Yangon-based analyst.

Another observer said: "It's not going as well as it was three months ago."

According to informed sources, the junta and the NLD are still in the "confidence-building" stage and are far from reaching the ultimate objective of the dialogue: democratization and the establishment of a civil government.

The NLD and the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) are really discussing only two issues at the moment—the freeing of political prisoners and the reopening of NLD branch offices around the country, they said.

The talks are being carried out sporadically through a liaison officer who couriers messages between the junta and Aung San Suu Kyi, who remains under de facto house arrest.

The NLD has made it clear they are frustrated by the slow pace of prisoner releases.

The junta says it has released some 186 NLD members since January, but 810 party members remain behind bars, with 17 of them NLD members of parliament from the 1990 elections that were nullified by the military.

The total number of NLD members in jail accounts for more than half of the 1,500 political prisoners the United Nations says are incarcerated in Myanmar.

Only 25 of the 40 original NLD branch offices have been authorized to reopen in Yangon in addition to their Mandalay headquarters and two other township offices.

"For the outside world the pace seems a bit slow, but for us it is going reasonably well," said deputy foreign minister Khin Maung Win. "There has been a confrontation between the two sides for the last 10 years, so to make a 180-degree turn needs of course a certain amount of time."

"This government knows very well that the military can't rule forever," he added. "We have no intention of clinging to power."

Analysts explained that the slowing pace of the talks could be attributed to a reluctance by the junta's top leader, Senior General Than Shwe, to move the dialogue forward.

"The major break is the No. 1, and he holds total and absolute power," an analyst said.

"Many believe that if it were up to Khin Nyunt it would move a lot faster," another observer said, referring to the regime's No. 3 leader, who has been charged with monitoring the talks.

Some observers believe a military shake-up that began last week and resulted in the sacking of high-ranking officials and the consolidation of power in Yangon weeds out hard-liners opposed to the talks.

Meanwhile, Aung San Suu Kyi "is in good spirits and is still ready for a compromise," an informed source says.

And the NLD remains cautious to avoid any gesture that could be perceived by the ruling junta as a provocation, diplomats said.

"She has no alternative but to continue the dialogue," an analyst said.

For the junta, disrupting the talks would have potentially disastrous consequences.

Western countries have thus far given Yangon the benefit of the doubt and are ready, if real progress is made, to begin lifting economic sanctions against Myanmar, whose economy is in shambles.

"There couldn't be a better environment than there is now," another observer noted. "The US and Europe have shown they were ready to ease their stand if the dialogue is moving ahead."

The European Union, which has sent several fact-finding teams to the military state, will soon send another troika to Yangon.

The International Labor Organization, too, is watching Myanmar closely and issued a report on forced labor following its October mission which Yangon says is "constructive."

Ismail Razali, the special envoy to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, is due to return to Myanmar later this month for his sixth visit as a "dialogue facilitator."

"The environment is favorable for progress in the dialogue, but the ball is now in the SPDC's court," an observer said. ***AFP***

How about the other way around?

I NOTICE from media reports that the mayor of Manila has given the big oil companies six months' time within which to relocate their bulk installations in Pandacan to another site because they pose a danger to the safety of residents in the vicinity and to Malacañang.

Applying this same logic for their relocation, we might as well request them to also relocate their existing bulk oil depots in Cebu, Bacolod, Iloilo, Dumaguete, Cagayan, Poro Point in La Union, Sasa in Davao, Surigao, Butuan, and General Santos in South Cotobato. The bulk depots in these locations are also surrounded with living quarters of mostly oil company workers.

Another beef against big oil firms is their inability to adjust retail prices whenever crude oil prices are reduced by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. They usually maintain 60 days' supply for their refinery operations and marketing requirements. Therefore, the finished products refined from earlier crude price levels should first be depleted before making adjustments to conform with the new Opec crude oil price.

The relocation and construction expenses represent a large investment which will undoubtedly be passed on to consumers. Perhaps it is more sensible to relocate the living quarters of the people living near these oil facilities. Probably, Malacañang could be transferred to Mindanao and Congress to the Batanes Islands to achieve a real separation of the executive and legislative branches of government.—**PETE N. BELTRAN, 11 Bulletin St., West Triangle, Quezon City**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

‘Cold-blooded murderer’

FBI brands killer anthrax mailer

WASHINGTON—A newly discovered letter suspected of containing anthrax and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee chairman will provide more evidence for investigators searching for “a cold-blooded murderer,” an FBI official said on Saturday.

“This is a cold-blooded murderer. There are four individuals dead as a result of this, none of them the intended targets, and we are working aggressively and furiously around the clock trying to resolve this,” Assistant FBI Director Van Harp told a Capitol Hill news conference.

The FBI discovered the suspicious envelope sent to Sen. Patrick Leahy, a Vermont Democrat, on Friday, and said it appeared to contain anthrax. Harp said the FBI awaited the results of tests to confirm the letter had anthrax.

The Leahy letter was similar to anthrax-contaminated letters sent to Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, a South Dakota Democrat, to NBC News anchorman Tom Brokaw and the New York Post newspaper, the FBI has said.

The FBI has been investigating to find out who is responsible for the germ warfare attacks that have killed four people. There have been 17 confirmed cases of anthrax, mostly connected to the US mail, after the Sept. 11 hijacked plane attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. *Reuters*

PEOPLE make their way amid debris near the World Trade Center in New York City Sept. 11, after one of the most horrifying attacks ever against the US. Since 8:48 a.m. on Sept. 11, when the first of two hijacked airliners crashed into the WTC towers, other disasters have struck the city. AP

Probers find farewell letter of plane hijacker

FRANKFURT, Germany—Authorities have found a package containing a lengthy letter from Sept. 11 hijacker Ziad Jarrah to his girlfriend, telling her he would not return from the United States, German prosecutors confirmed Saturday.

Frauke Scheuten, spokeswoman for the federal prosecutors office, said a package containing the letter had been sent to Germany by Jarrah, suspected of flying the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania.

The package was later returned to the United States where authorities discovered it, she said.

Besides the letter, which Scheuten described as a love letter bidding his girlfriend farewell, the package also contained papers about Jarrah's flight training, she said.

“I have done what I had to do,” the German weekly Der Spiegel quoted the letter as saying in a Saturday release of its Monday edition. “You should be very proud, because it is an honor and in the end you will see that everyone will be happy.”

According to Der Spiegel, the four-page letter is dated Sept. 10 and authorities believe it was written hours before the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center were carried out. Due to a mistake in the address, the package was returned to the United States and fell into the hands of the FBI last week, Der Spiegel said.

“Hold on to what you have until we see each other again,” Der Spiegel said Jarrah wrote to his girlfriend.

Jarrah, a 26-year-old Lebanese native, often visited his girlfriend, German girlfriend of Turkish descent, Ayse Sengun, in the western German City of Bochum where she was studying medicine.

But he lived and studied in Hamburg along with two other suspected hijackers, Mohamed Atta and Marwan Al-Shehhi.

The three are thought to have been the organizers of the attacks and pilots of three of the four planes used to carry out the attacks.

Meanwhile, Focus weekly reported Saturday in an early release of its Monday edition that German investigators believe Said Bahaji, suspected of organizing apartments, documents and money for the Hamburg cell, may be in Bahrain.

An international arrest warrant has been issued for Bahaji, who left Germany eight days before the Sept. 11 attacks and flew to Pakistan. Focus said the German-Moroccan national is believed to have left Karachi three days later for Bahrain. *AP*

Afghan women should choose role, says US

WASHINGTON—On the heels of a scathing US report about the plight of women in Afghanistan, officials in Washington Sunday planned a full-scale media blitz to continue to criticize Taliban policies affecting women.

The publicity effort—the latest US front in its campaign against the hardline Islamic regime—comes just one day after the US State Department released a report decrying the years of repression and abuse endured by Afghan women at the hands of the fundamentalist Taliban.

The regime systematically repressed all sectors of the population and denied even the most basic individual rights. Yet the Taliban's war against women was particularly “appalling,” the department said in its report.

“Only Afghanis can determine the future government of their country,” it said. “And Afghan women should have the right to choose their role in that future.”

Ten years ago, women represented an estimated 70 percent of the teachers, 50 percent of the government workers and 40 percent of the doctors in Kabul, the report said.

But when the Islamic militia took power in 1996, women were forced to quit their jobs, the women's university was closed and girls over the age of eight were denied an education, the report said.

The Taliban restricted women's access to health care and their ability to move about freely, and imposed a strict dress code under which women had to be covered from head to toe in public or face dire consequences, including fines and beatings.

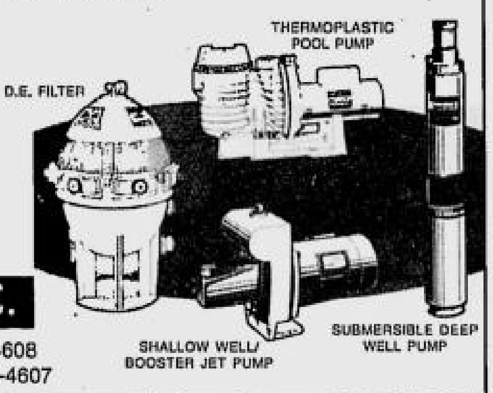
It said the Islamic regime “has cruelly reduced women and girls to poverty, poor health and illiteracy—conditions that are not in conformity with the treatment of women in the Muslim world or with the tenets of Islam.”

The report mentioned the case of a woman who was given 100 lashes in a stadium packed with people after being caught in the street with a man who was not a relative.

“She was lucky,” the report said. “If she had been married and found with an unrelated male, the punishment would have been death by stoning.”

“The life of Afghan women is so bad,” said Najeeba, a 35-year-old Kabul widow identified in the report only by her first name. “We are locked at home and cannot see the sun.”

The report quoted Taliban education minister Syed Ghaisuddin defending the policy. “It's like having a flower or a rose. You water it and keep it at home for yourself, to look at it and smell it. It is not supposed to be taken out of the house to be smelled.” *AFP*



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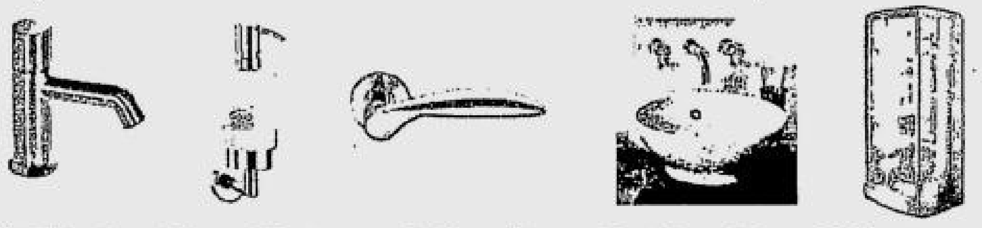

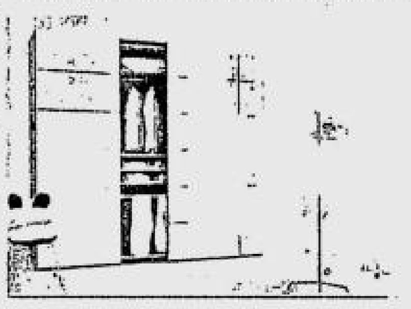

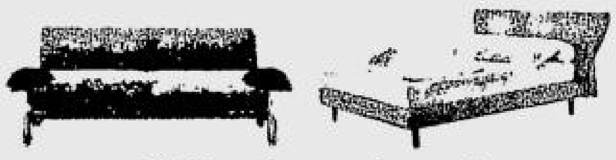

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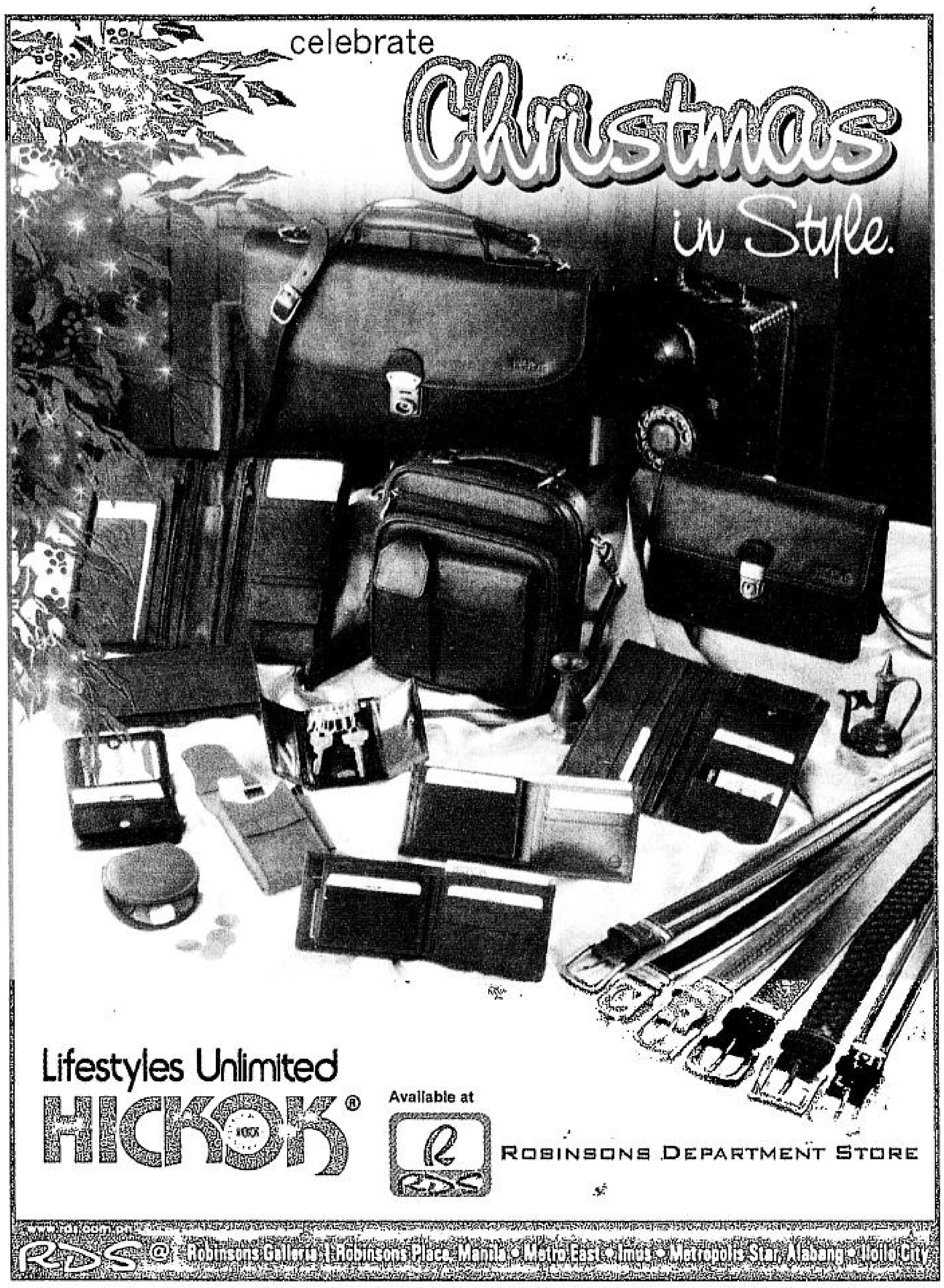
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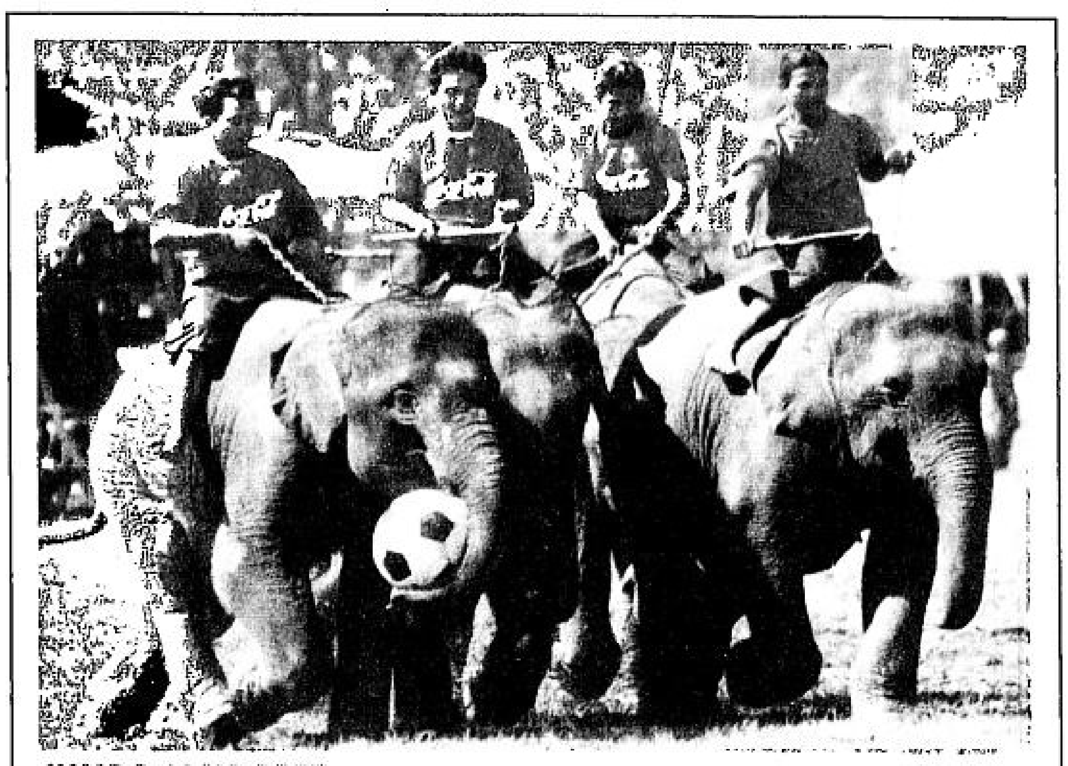

JUMBO JAMBOREE AP

An elephant jostles teammates during a soccer match Nov. 17 in Surin province, Thailand held as part of the annual Surin Elephant Roundud, where pachyderms display their dexterity and intelligence. More than 250 elephants were on show at the event, meant not only to draw tourists but also to recall the glory days of the elephants which influenced Thai life for influence.

Rugova party wins Kosovo self-rule poll

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia—The ethnic Albanian party, led by writer-turned-politician Ibrahim Rugova, has won the largest share of votes in Kosovo's parliamentary elections, without securing an outright majority, exit polls indicated early Sunday.

Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) appears to have won 45 percent of the vote in Saturday's election for a 120-member parliament in the Yugoslav province, against 24 percent for its nearest rival, the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), according to an exit poll by the non-governmental Kosova Action for Civic Initiatives (KACI).

The NGO estimated the third main ethnic Albanian political grouping, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), had taken around eight percent of the popular vote.

It said other parties would together win about 23 percent of the vote, including 10 percent for the Coalition for Return, the only Serb political grouping to take part in the election.

It said the figures were based on interviews at all 1,860 polling stations in Kosovo, and elsewhere in Serbia and in Montenegro, where non-Albanian refugees, mostly Serbs, had voted in Saturday's election. KACI said it worked in collaboration with a Serb non-governmental organization, Kovoski Bozur.

Another NGO, the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms, produced similar figures. It had the LDK with 47 percent of the vote, the PDK with 26 percent and the AAK nine percent, based on a much smaller sample.

The three parties have all campaigned on pro-independence platforms.

However, officials of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), which will remain the ultimate authority in the province, have emphasized that the assembly will never be allowed to declare independence for Kosovo from Yugoslavia, a fear of many Serbs.

Rugova, 57, who led a campaign of passive resistance against the regime of former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic, is the frontrunner to be elected president by the parliament.

The president will nominate a Prime Minister, who in turn will form a government.

In Belgrade, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic said Saturday he expected the Serbs to take at least 20 seats in the parliament. *AFP*

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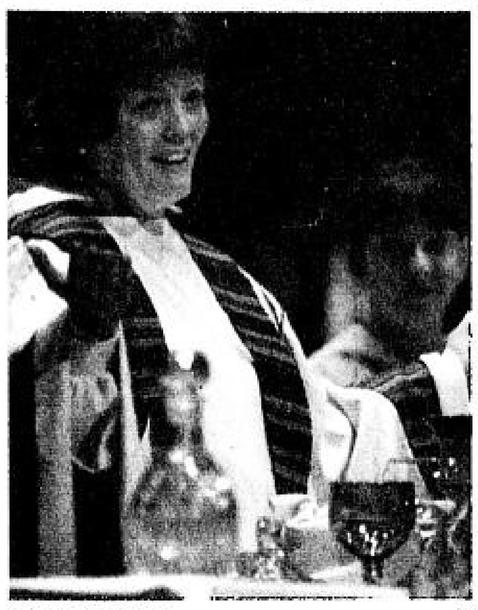


ORDAINED AP

Mary Ramerman is shown being ordained as a Catholic priest at the Eastman Theater in Rochester, N.Y. Nov. 17. Ramerman's parish, Spriritus Christi in Rochester, broke away from the Catholic Church in 1999.

Taiwan protesters demand Nationalists return assets

TAIPEI, Taiwan—Waving flags and chanting "give your assets back to the government," hundreds of Taiwanese marched through the capital Sunday, demanding the former ruling Nationalist Party hand over wealth they claim was stolen from the public during decades of authoritarian rule.

The issue is one of the biggest controversies ahead of the Dec. 1 legislative election. It could also prove to be a focal point of major struggles soon, especially if the Nationalists lose their majority control in the legislature.

Waving flags and wearing headbands Sunday, protesters kicked large inflated balls around as they marched. "Give the assets back to the people," was written on the blue balls, which matched the Nationalists' Party colors.

With thousand dollar bills tacked onto the back and front of his shirt, Chonghsin Go, an engineering professor, said, "Much of the Nationalist Party's wealth came from the people. Why don't they give the money back?"

The peaceful parade began at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial, a monument to the late Nationalist president, and passed by the party's lavish headquarters, guarded by hundreds of shield-wielding police.

Many protesters carried flags for legislative candidates and more than 30 campaign trucks with blaring loudspeakers joined the rally.

The Nationalist Party is one of the world's richest parties, holding property, securities and a sprawling business empire with an estimated total value of more than US$2 billion. Much of the wealth was amassed during the party's authoritarian rule of the island, which ended in the late 1980s.

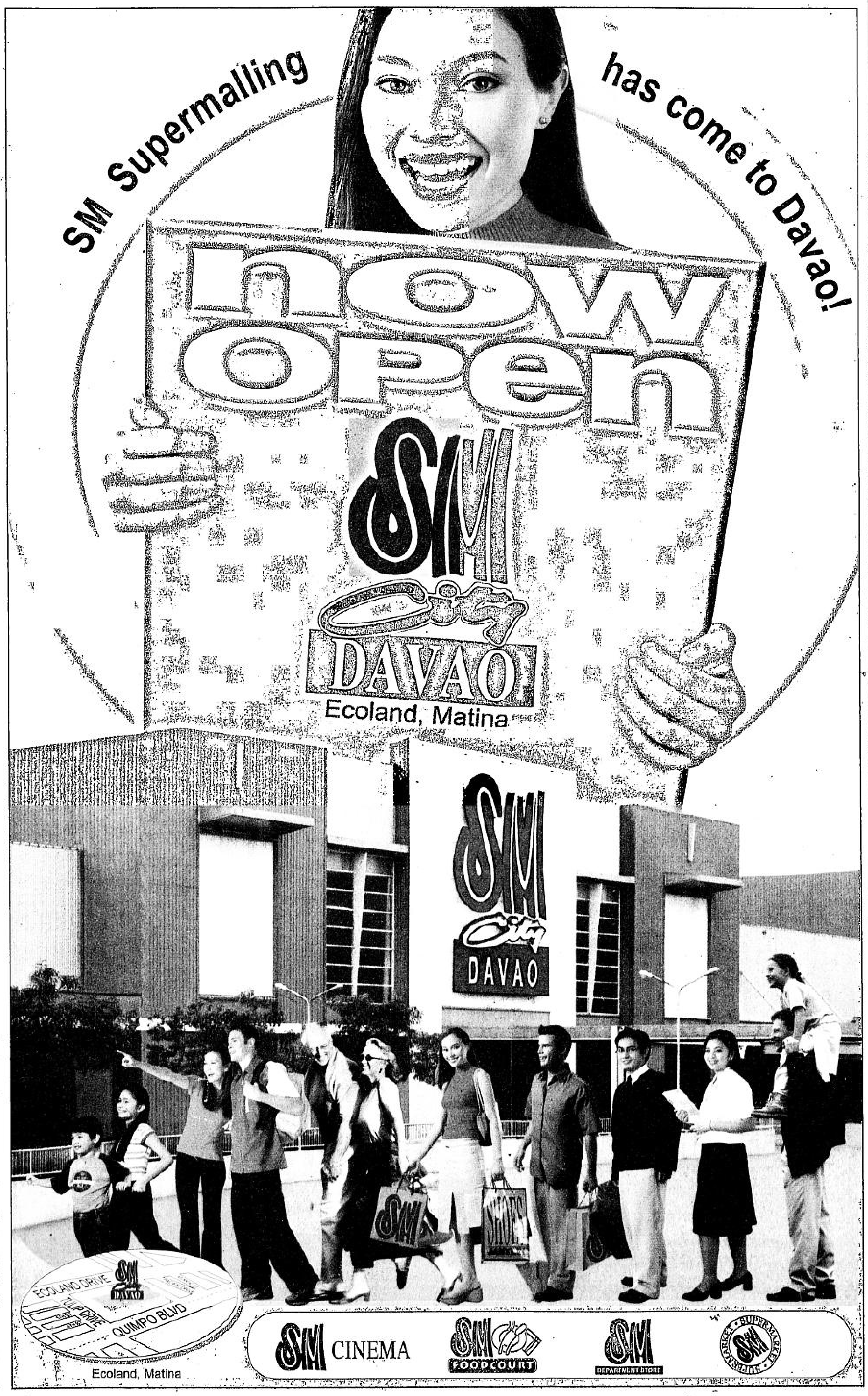
During last year's presidential campaign, Nationalist candidate Lien Chan told voters the party would reform and place its business interests in a trust. Lien, a former vice president, placed a dismal third in the election, but the party pledged to honor Lien's promise.

The Nationalists have argued that they obtained all their property legally and that the party could lawfully use the profits generated on election campaigns.

But President Chen Shui-bian's new government has conducted a yearlong probe into the questioned assets. Officials recently said they would ask the Nationalists to clarify how they had obtained some of the assets and may propose a new law to allow the seizure of the assets if they were found to be improperly acquired.

Party critics say the Nationalists' glittering, marble headquarters, facing the presidential office, was acquired at below-market prices after years of free occupation by the party.

Another much-questioned property is a large expanse in downtown Taipei, formerly occupied by the state radio, which critics say the party obtained for free and sold for Taiwan $9 billion (US$260 million) three years ago. *AP*



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World financial leaders united as protests wither in the cold

OTTAWA—In a sweeping show of unity, the world's richest nations on Saturday promised to cut interest rates further if needed to bolster a bleak world economy as an anti-globalization protest withered in the cold.

With the International Monetary Fund taking center stage on the second day of international financial meetings here, police made 32 arrests as about 4,000 protesters, some of them burning the US flag, rallied against the guardians of globalization and the bombing in Afghanistan.

Inside barricades erected to protect the meetings from the protesters, finance ministers and central bankers from around the world met to chart the actions the IMF would take in the months ahead to try and counter an increasingly dour and uncertain global economic outlook.

The IMF's International Monetary and Financial Committee said in its communiqué that rich nations must take the lead in boosting growth—and that those countries stood ready to do so with even lower interest rates if needed.

"All monetary authorities said they stand ready to take further action if necessary," Gordon Brown, British Chancellor of the Exchequer and IMFC chairman told a news briefing.

But on the hotly-debated topic of whether the IMF should take a leading role in the fight against funding terrorism, the lender's policy-setting committee opted against expanding its mandate to become a global financial policeman.

The communiqué reiterated that the IMF expects the world economy will start to recover by the second half of next year.

"The advanced economies have a key responsibility to promote early recovery in global growth," the IMFC's communiqué said. "The recent easing of monetary policy in the United States, the euro area, and other advanced economies is welcome, and the authorities stand ready to take further action if appropriate."

The IMFC is the fund's policy-setting committee, with representatives from across the spectrum of the IMF's 183 members. It meets twice a year to set the lender's agenda.

Financial leaders also talked about the rebuilding of Afghanistan once the war there ends while Argentine officials worked frantically to build support for a debt swap they plan to start on Monday.

A heavy police presence, a modest turnout and cold weather combined to keep protests fairly subdued although one skirmish saw police use tear gas to control the crowd and another plastic bullets. Mid-afternoon, police hosed the crowd with water, very uncomfortable for protesters in the cold air. *Reuters*

A PROTESTER makes a victory sign as plastic handcuffs are snapped on him by riot police in downtown Ottawa, Ontario, Nov. 17. AP

Rich, poor nations vow to combat terror money

OTTAWA—Industrialized and developing nations, gathered in Ottawa to assess global economic conditions, vowed on Saturday to do whatever was needed to staunch the flow of funds to extremist groups.

In a statement issued after a meeting of the Group of 20 countries, finance ministers and central bank chiefs promised to follow United Nations guidelines to prevent financial systems being used by groups to bankroll events like the Sept 11 attacks in New York and Washington.

But Canadian Finance Minister Paul Martin, who chaired the group's meeting, said the decisions went further than that.

"What we are doing is we are saying that every country is going to set up an organization, the sole goal of which is going to be to track money laundering and terrorist financing," he told a news conference.

"Not only is (the action plan) detailed, but it is very, very thorough and very far-reaching."

Martin admitted that some countries might need financial help to meet these money laundering goals. Industrialized countries could provide financing or expertise, and international lenders would also have a role to play.

"The fight against terrorism financing is a shared responsibility of the G20 and the broader international community," the group said in a communiqué after a morning meeting.

The G20 includes the richest industrial countries and top emerging nations. It was set up after the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis to find ways for countries to cooperate on key global economic and security issues.

Each G20 member said it would publish lists of people and organizations suspected of such activities, putting a spotlight on their activities as the United States already is doing.

US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill told a separate news conference that the IMF wanted to help in the fight against financing for terrorism by putting a higher priority on ensuring that banking systems by member countries were not used by extremist groups. *Reuters*

Britain calls for $50B more for poor areas

OTTAWA—British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown is challenging the world's wealthiest nations to come up with an extra $50 billion annually by 2015 to help the world's poorest countries, citing a responsibility "to abolish all forms of human poverty."

Brown, who made his case in Ottawa to global finance chiefs meeting this weekend, unveiled his proposal in a speech Friday at the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

World Bank President James Wolfensohn issued a similar plea here to policymakers, saying aid to developing nations needs to be doubled from its current levels of $50 billion a year.

Brown said the aid needs have been highlighted by the terror attacks on the United States, which caused economic effects worldwide.

"The alliance we have forged against terrorism since Sept. 11 . . . confirms a profound and pervasive truth: that in the new global economy we are, all of us, the richest countries and the poorest countries, inextricably bound to one another by common interests, shared needs and linked destinies," he said.

"Not only do we have inescapable obligations beyond our front doors and garden gates, responsibilities beyond the city wall and duties beyond our national boundaries, but that this generation has it in our power—if it so chooses—to abolish all forms of human poverty."

To achieve the development goals of the major international organizations by 2015, Brown said, "there will be required each year until 2015 an extra $50 billion a year," and acknowledged that this "would require unprecedented action by the developed world.

"I see it as a challenge we must try to meet."

US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said he discussed the issue with IMF officials here, but was hesitant about just handing out more money at address the problem.

After 50 years of spending an enormous amount of money in the name of development without great success, developed nations must strive for more concrete results, like measuring productivity increase by how much a developing nation can raise the living standards of its people.

"I think this is possible to do and I think I'm making some friends who agree that it's time for us to . . . (make) a difference in living conditions that people have by creating real economic development and not just more giving," O'Neill said at a closing news conference. *AFP*

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1. Ang Raffle Promo ay magsisimula sa May 30, 2001 hanggang March 18, 2002. Mga international money transfer na ipinadala at natanggap lamang ng sinumang Filipino citizens of legal age mula sa mga kasaling Western Union agent locations sa Metro Manila ang puwedeng isali sa prize draw.
2. Sa unang pagtanggap ng iyong pamilya o kaibigan ng international money transfer na galing sa iyo sa kahit saan mang participating Western Union agent location sa Metro Manila ay mabibigyan sila ng Western Union Pass Book at malalagyan ng isang sticker ang kanilang Passbook.
3. Sa bawat pagtanggap nila ng international money transfer ay malalagyan ng isang sticker ang kanilang Passbook.
4. Kapag may tatlong stickers na ang kanilang Passbook at na-validate na ito ng participating WU agent sa Metro Manila ay papupuntahin sila sa fulfillment centers para ibigay ang kanilang Pass Book
5. Sa fulfillment center ay pupunitin ang kalahating pahina ng passbook na may tatlong stickers at ang booklet na may raffle coupon ay isasoli sa customers kasama ng free gift na kanilang pipiliin (caps, K-wallets, T-shirts o phonebook).
6. Puwede na silang sumali sa Western Union DREAM HOME PRIZE DRAW. Mga kumpletong certificate lamang ng iyong qualified receiver (tatlong validated stickers kasama ang kanilang pangalan, address, telephone number, at signature), ang puwedeng isali sa prize draw.
7. Di maaaring ilipat ang mga stickers na natanggap ng iyong receiver (halimbawa: hindi tatanggapin ng fulfillment centers ang tatlong certificates na may tig-iisang sticker lamang)
8. Makakakuha lamang ng free gift pag nakakumpleto ng tatlong stickers sa Western Union Passbook.
9. Para makasali sa prize draw, dapat maghulog ang iyong receiver ng validated certificate sa drop box sa fulfillment center isang linggo bago ang scheduled na prize draw.
10. Kapag ito ay di nabunot, ang validated certificate ay isasali sa susunod na raffle draw.
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12. Ang WESTERN UNION Dream Home Promotion winner ay kailangang Filipino citizen of legal age.
13. Ang mananalo sa bawat DREAM HOME prize draw ay siyang dapat na nakapagpadala receiver sa tatlong qualifying international money transfers na isinali.
14. Ipaaalam ng Western Union sa DREAM HOME winner ang kanyang pagkapanalo sa loob ng 48 hours ng prize draw sa pamamagitan ng Registered Mail.
15. Ang mga hindi mananalong entries ay isasama sa mga susunod na draws.
16. Ipagbibigay alam sa mga nanalo ang petsa ng awarding ceremony na gaganapin sa lugar ng house and lot na premyo.
17. Ilalabas din ang mga pangalan ng mga DREAM HOME winners sa print ads sa Pilipinas.
18. Ang matatanggap na premyo ng WESTERN UNION DREAM HOME winner ay isang house and lot sa ReginaVille 2000 sa Barangay Inocencio, Trece Martires, Cavite-Floor plan SPW-D (Constructor: BANFF Realty & Development Corporation).
19. Isang house and lot lamang ang ipamimigay sa bawat draw at wala ng ibang premyong ibibigay maliban dito.
20. Ang WESTERN UNION ang magbabayad ng 20% tax sa mga premyong hihigit ng P10,000.
21. Ang WESTERN UNION Dream Home Prize Draw ay limitado lamang sa mga tatanggap (na Filipino citizens of legal age) ng international money transfer sa kahit saan mang kasaling Western Union agent location sa Metro Manila mula May 30, 2001 hanggang March 11, 2002.
22. Mga premyo na hindi kinuha ng nanalo sa WESTERN UNION Dream Home Prize Draw ay ibabalik sa Western Union na may pahintulot at approval ng DTI.

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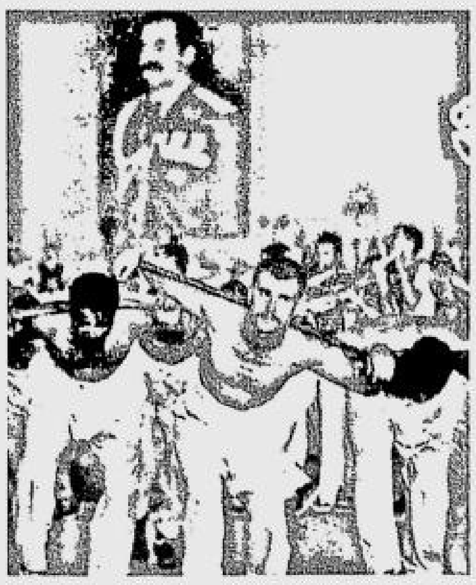

BAGHDAD DAY AFP

Iraqi men perform the talulux dance under a portrait of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to celebrate "Baghdad Day" Nov. 15 in Baghdad. The day marked the founding of Islamic Baghdad in 1277 under Caliph Abu Jaffar al-Mansur.

UN scientist warns of deadly pig disease

ROME—A scientist with the UN food agency sounded a warning Friday about the global spread of a deadly pig disease that is having a devastating effect on herds and has puzzled experts who have failed to find a cure.

Concerns about Post-weaning Multi-systematic Wasting Syndrome (PMWS) caused the hog futures market in the United States to crash on Friday.

"It is a worry. The disease is getting worse and we don't know what to do about it," said Dr Peter Roeder, an animal health officer specializing in virology at the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

"I'm sure it will be the final nail in the coffin of some pig farmers," Roeder told AFP.

The wasting disease is present in many countries, including Britain, where it has cut a swath through an estimated 40 percent of the national herd in an industry brought to its knees by the foot and mouth outbreak earlier this year.

"It's such a factor now because there is a lot of attention on epidemic disease after the foot-and-mouth outbreak.

"The pig industry had been hoping to start making a recovery and now it is being hit by this.

"The hog futures market in the States crashed today because of fears of the spread of the disease.

"The US could now introduce an embargo on pig products from Europe," he added.

Roeder said that although he was involved with developing countries, the disease posed less of a problem for the village producers typical of poorer countries.

"It's a disease that occurs mainly in intensive pig production systems, and will be a big concern to big producers in Thailand, Vietnam and China. I know that China is very worried about it."

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Israel pullback prepares stage for EU talks

JERUSALEM—Israel announced a troop withdrawal from a Palestinian City ahead of talks on Sunday with a European Union delegation that has called for the relaunch of the Middle East peace process.

The Israeli Army said on Saturday it had left Tulkarm, the latest pullout under US and international pressure from areas seized last month after the assassination of an Israeli cabinet minister.

"We're out completely. We're outside the city. We're not in Area A," an Army spokeswoman said, using a term designating Palestinian-ruled territory. She said the phased pullback began on Thursday.

An Army announcement said Israeli forces continued to encircle Tulkarm from positions outside Palestinian-controlled areas. Palestinian security officials said Israeli soldiers just north of the city remained inside reoccupied land.

In what it called operations to prevent attacks by Palestinian militants, Israel moved troops into or around six cities in the West Bank after the Oct. 17 assassination of far-right Tourism Minister Rehavam Zeevi.

The Army had withdrawn from four of them prior to the Tulkarm move. It remains in Palestinian areas around the city of Jenin but is widely expected to leave before a US visit early next month by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

EU delegation

The EU delegation, led by Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, had talks with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Saturday and was due to see Sharon on Sunday.

"The Europeans want to underline that after the 12 days of relative quiet recently there is a need to relaunch the peace process," Verhofstadt told a news conference in the West Bank City of Ramallah after meeting Arafat.

"And there's a good chance to relaunch the peace process, not only because of the quiet but because now in the international community there is agreement . . . that if you want to find a solution to the conflict, you have to establish an independent Palestinian state."

Sporadic violence was reported on Saturday in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

At least 705 Palestinians and 188 Israelis have been killed since a Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation began in September 2000.

US President George Bush recently endorsed a Palestinian state, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres expressed his support for the same goal on Thursday while stressing he was not voicing formal Israeli government policy.

Verhofstadt, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, met earlier on Saturday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Verhofstadt said in Cairo that Egypt and the EU saw a "need to pressure both parties to sit around the same table" and begin "in the very near future" to put into motion proposals by a panel led by former US Senator George Mitchell.

Mitchelle blueprint

The Mitchell blueprint calls for a ceasefire, confidence-building measures that include an Israeli settlement freeze in occupied territories, and the eventual resumption of peace talks.

"When we're encouraging President Arafat to continue in the way he has in the past 12 days, we are demanding the same efforts from Israel," Verhofstadt said in the West Bank City of Ramallah.

He also said the EU believed that there was a need for a Palestinian state as part of any final agreement.

"We also say there's a need to guarantee the security of Israel," Verhofstadt said, calling for future talks to move directly to achieving a permanent settlement.

Arafat said at the news conference the Palestinians would "exert maximum effort to continue the ceasefire we have started."

Reuters

55 Venezuelan inmates escape via waste canal

CARACAS—A group of 55 inmates escaped from prison near the town of Maturin in southeastern Venezuela through an underground wastewater canal, the head of the local military garrison told AFP.

The breakout took place early Saturday, and two of the escapees were captured just two hours after just two hours on the lam, Army commander Angel Gonzalez said.

The inmates fled the La Pica prison through a wastewater tunnel that ends in a mountainous area covered in thick vegetation behind the prison, Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez was interviewed via cellular telephone as he flew over the area in a helicopter searching for the escapees.

Venezuela has 32 overcrowded prisons and a population of 16,000 inmates.

Three years ago 21 inmates escaped from the La Pica prison. And in early August, 34 inmates broke out of the Rodeo prison, located in Guatire, just east of Caracas.

AFP

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Robbery on priest slay countered

Motive was to get rid of him, say witnesses, kin

By Romulo Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

MABITAC, Laguna—There are strong indications that the killing of town parish priest Fr. Arsenio "Jun" Plata Jr. last Wednesday here was well planned to get rid of him, according to evidence presented by a priest, relatives and witnesses.

Plata's first cousin Fr. Nel Plata told the INQUIRER that he was shocked to know that his wallet—which contained his professional driver's license, two ATM cards, a Macro Card and some cash—were found in the possession of murder suspect Alvin de la Peña.

De la Peña, 25, is a resident of Sitio Silab, Barangay Longos, Kalayaan, Laguna.

"The murder suspect must have gone first to my convent in Los Baños to ascertain the identity of the real target. The assassin could have verified who of the two of us was going to be liquidated," said Father Nel, who is the parish priest of Los Baños, Laguna.

Sr. Insp. Potenciano Escobel, Los Baños police chief, had certified on Nov. 17 that Father Nel's wallet was stolen inside his convent about 3 p.m. on Nov. 6.

This same wallet was recovered when De la Peña was arrested by Mabitac police.

"No other church properties were taken, except for my wallet, which I placed inside my room," Father Nel said.

A Mabitac parish church employee, who requested anonymity, said that as early as 5 p.m., Oct. 29, she and a companion noticed a suspicious-looking person, with a backpack, peeping through the church and the convent.

Father Jun was not around that day and the man, who was alone, left the church premises after going back and forth three times, the employee said.

Gavina Plata, 68, widow and mother of the slain priest who witnessed the incident, told the INQUIRER that she saw two men at the time of the killing.

The victim and one of them appeared to be talking to each other while the other man was standing at a distance.

The mother said that she then saw the man talking with Father Jun stabbing her son.

She said she saw the suspect, who was wearing a yellow cap, remove several clothes from his body—colored red, blue, green and white—while running away from the scene.

"The same persons who murdered my son seem to be the ones who shouted 'robbers, robbers' because there were no other individuals in the church, except for me and Father Jun," she said.

Mabitac police chief Insp. Fernando Eleazar Guico Jr., in a report to Laguna Police Provincial Office dated Nov. 16, said they recovered from De la Peña, during his arrest, a knife, a brown wallet, a backpack containing a white T-shirt, white-gray pants, shorts stained with blood and several pieces of mechanical tools.

The suspect, who was hit by bullets on his feet during the chase that followed the stabbing, is being treated at the Laguna Provincial Hospital in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Msgr. Jerry Bitoon, a colleague of the victim, said he would not buy the robbery theory of the local police.

He said the priests of the diocese would ask the assistance of the National Bureau of Investigation or any independent body to pursue other angles in Plata's senseless killing.

Father Bitoon said more than 100 priests of the diocese, together with parishioners, are expected to show up tomorrow morning to join a concelebrated Mass and prayer assembly to condemn the dastardly act of the criminal against a peace-loving church leader.

Vice Chancellor Fr. Cesar Gonzales—in an invitation letter to all priests, religious clerics, school administrators and lay faithful—said the Nov. 19 monthly recollection of the clergy will be cancelled.

Instead, he said, there will be a concelebrated Mass in honor of the late Fr. Jun Plata at 10 a.m. in Mabitac Church.

After the Eucharist, Father Plata's remains will be transferred to his hometown in Julugan 3, Tanza, Cavite.

Interment will be on Nov. 26, at the Tanza Cemetery.

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News that makes
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Diarrhea kills 8, downs 150 in Samar

By Joey Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Eight persons have died while 150 others became ill due to a diarrhea outbreak that hit two upstream barangays in Jipapad, Eastern Samar.

Contaminated drinking water is believed to have caused the outbreak reported in the villages of San Roque and Cagmanaba, 6.5 kilometers and 8 kilometers, respectively, from the town proper.

"There was really an outbreak of the diarrhea (in the two villages) as there were cases of confirmed deaths and hundreds others were afflicted," said Ligaya Anacta-Acosta, regional information officer of the Department of Health in Eastern Visayas (DOH-8).

Acosta said the diarrhea cases in the two villages were reported since Nov. 6, during which time tropical storm "Nanang" hit Eastern Visayas, up to Nov. 15.

Most of those who suffered from diarrhea were brought to the district hospital in Oras, Eastern Samar, the town next to Jipapad, as the latter does not have a municipal hospital.

Those who died were identified as Pata Quimbo, 5; Raymundo Rotamula, 22; Nestor Pecayo, 14; Rosario Compas, 15; Delmarie Lebico, 10, and Perlyn Pajamella, 10—all of Cagmanaba; and Dessa Orda, 6, and Jesus Nuguid, 5 both of San Roque.

Nuguid was the latest victim who died on Nov. 15.

The municipal government, on the order of Mayor Noel Montallana, shouldered the burial expenses of the victims.

Acosta said the regional health office upon information relayed to them by Jipapad health officer Dr. Eva Japson, immediately dispatched a medical team headed by medical specialist Dr. Alice Go.

Acosta said their initial investigation traced the outbreak to the drinking water sources of these barangays, composed of crudely made water wells, that were contaminated by debris and other bacteria carried by floodwaters at the height of tropical storm Nanang.

The outbreak was already contained since the medical team had already treated the villages' water sources with chlorine.

But Acosta said residents in Jipapad, especially in the two affected barangays, are advised to continue to boil their drinking water.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 14°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 19°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 22°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 20°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Bacolod	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 25°

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AFP pushes 'terrorist' label for NPA

CAMP DANGWA, Benguet—Armed Forces chief of staff, Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, has called the communist insurgency in the country as a form of terrorism, and is urging the government to respond by using international and Asian agreements to combat terrorism.

"For people who assassinate governors or former congressmen, for people who assassinate political leaders and who are tearing down infrastructure to (everyone's) detriment . . . I do not (have) any other word to describe them except terrorists . . . This is definitive," Villanueva said here Friday.

"I don't know (if) the Americans would accept this definition, but for us (Filipinos), especially in the military, we treat them as terrorists and we ask (government) that they be treated (as such)."

But Villanueva said the AFP has yet to obtain Malacañang's position about a definition for terrorism.

He said the military had always labeled the communist insurgents as dissident terrorists or DTs in formal military reports and communiqués to Malacañang.

But the military wants the tag to be an official label as accelerated communist attacks in the North aggravates the country's vulnerabilities to organized crime and Muslim extremists. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

GMA trips yield anti-terror budget

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin on Saturday said President Macapagal-Arroyo's foreign trips have yielded an anti-terrorism budget that even critics of the military are no longer denouncing.

Malacañang is prepared to add another P1 billion to oversee the country's anti-terrorism campaign towards the end of the year, "at no cost to the administration's billowing P145-billion deficit," Boncodin told reporters here after she was honored with a parade by the Philippine Military Academy cadets.

She said the government decided to bankroll the arms and manpower buildup of both the military and the Philippine National Police this year.

The government has realized that both the domestic and international communities now back the Philippines' aggressive stance against terrorism, organized crime and insurgency, she said.

"These (anti-terrorism conventions of cooperation and the budget to combat terrorism) are all connected . . . Whereas before there were (protests) against the Armed Forces of the Philippines' modernization program—(they ask government) why it is funding (the military's upgrade)—now they are not because they are fully supportive of government's efforts (to stop) terrorism," Boncodin said.

Foreign support to the country's anti-terrorism program is expected to come in the form of logistical and hardware support, Boncodin said.

But the country has already obtained fresh mandates of cooperation from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in the fight against terrorism.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has lobbied strongly for a unified Asean stand against international terrorism.

"I think it is very important to note that there is unity in government and outside government, with respect to the fact that (everyone wants) an end to (the problem of law and order)," Boncodin said.

She said the goodwill can help the Macapagal administration push for a P10-billion seed fund for the AFP modernization program in the proposed 2002 General Appropriations Act and sustain government's anti-terrorism budget agenda in the coming years.

Boncodin said the government released P1 billion two months ago for the military operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

The P1 billion allotment for November and December, which Boncodin secured from savings estimated between P6 billion and P7 billion, will augment the first P1-billion release.

The amount would cover additional police expenditures, including the recruitment of 1,300 policemen, as Ms Macapagal aims for an aggressive assault on kidnap-for-ransom groups to restore law and order, she said.

New flashflood hits Camiguin

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—More than a week after a tragedy hit Camiguin province, another flashflood occurred in the capital town of Mambajao before midnight Saturday.

Casiano Matela, Office of Civil Defense director for northern Mindanao, said non-residential areas in Barangays Balbagon, Yumbing, Campana and Pandan were hit.

An unidentified person was reported missing. But about 45 families had to evacuate.

Matela said the provincial government was still assessing the damage wrought by the recent flashflood.

On Nov. 7, 149 persons were killed, and 76 reported missing when flashfloods caused by Typhoon Nanang hit five towns.

The most damaged was Barangay Hubangon in Mahinog town where a whirlwind caused flashfloods that uprooted trees and made boulders from a mountain roll over houses.
Butch Enerio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

NPA chief in Visayas nabbed

By C. A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—A suspected rebel nabbed by the police here early this month was identified Friday to be the top New People's Army leader in Central Visayas.

Supt. Sancho Bernales, Bohol's police director, said the man arrested on Nov. 4 earlier thought to be an ordinary rebel turned out to be Alberto Acerdin, tagged as the military chief of the NPA main guerrilla unit in Central Visayas.

Acerdin, alias Ka Merto, initially gave his name as Antonio Delloso but he later admitted his real name after elements of the military intelligence unit in Cebu came to Bohol and confirmed Acerdin's identity to corroborate the claim of a policeman who knew the rebel leader, Bernales said.

Police claimed Acerdin was involved in the 1999 raid of a police headquarters in Danao town and in the slaying of Insp. Victor Hibaya in Buenavista town last year.

Acerdin was arrested at the wharf in Getafe town. The two policemen who arrested him, PO3 Vicente Ortiz and PO2 Julius Nacua of the Getafe police, did not realize until much later that he was a rebel leader.

Acerdin was nabbed for illegal possession of firearm and ammunition. Ortiz and Nacua were responding to a request for assistance after Acerdin reportedly pulled out his gun and aimed it at a man who punched his still unidentified companion.

Acerdin gave his name as Delloso, 46, high school graduate, married and a resident of Barrio Luz, Cebu City. He was later charged with illegal possession of firearm and ammunition before the Talibon Municipal Circuit Trial Court.

His real name was uncovered after he was brought to Camp Dagohoy in Tagbilaran City where SPO1 Danilo Navarro, formerly of the Provincial Mobile Group, recognized Acerdin as among those who raided their PMG headquarters in Danao town on Dec. 14, 1999.

Acerdin was also found to have two pending arrest warrants for rebellion as a result of the Danao raid and for homicide for the Hibaya killing.

Military intelligence sources said Acerdin was recruited by former NPA chief Romulo Kintanar in 1985 into the dreaded Sparrow Unit and operated in Manila.

Acerdin was previously arrested in Hagobiao, Mandaue City in 1988. After a court hearing, he was rescued by his comrades in 1989. A policeman was killed during the rescue operation.

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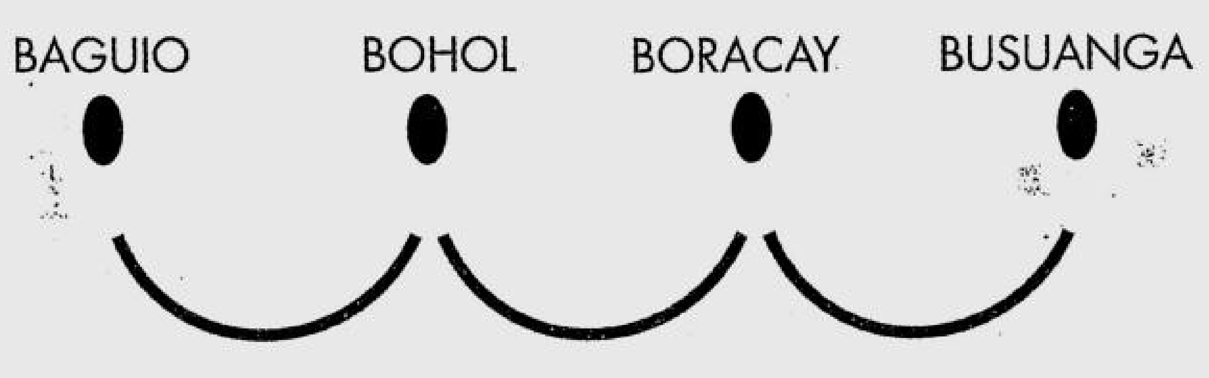

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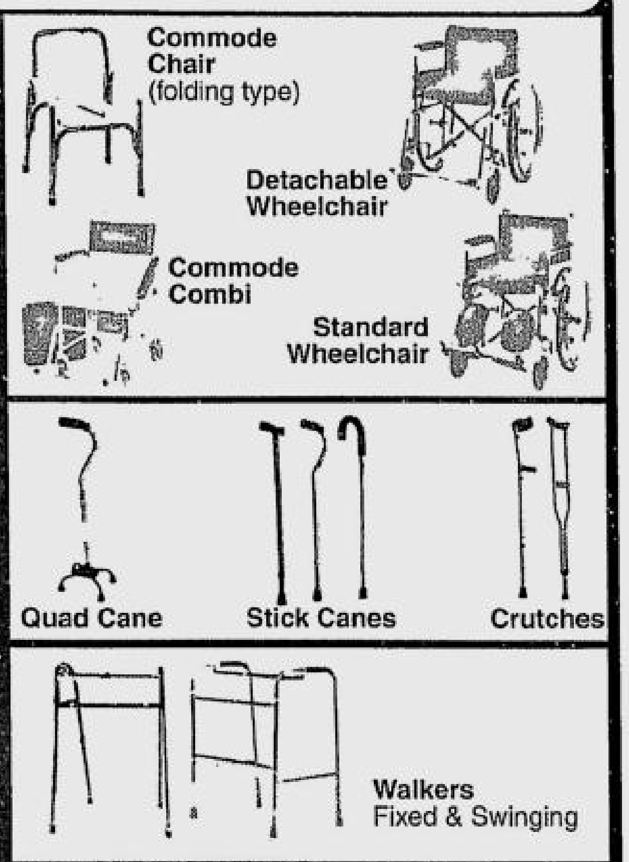

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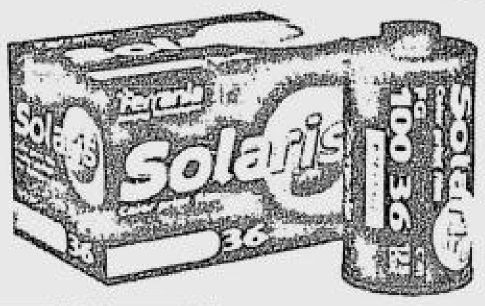

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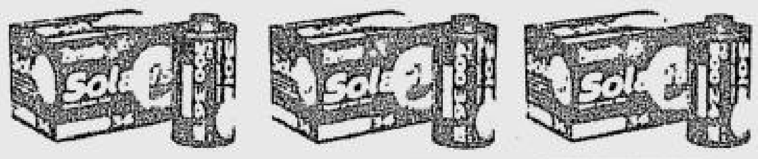

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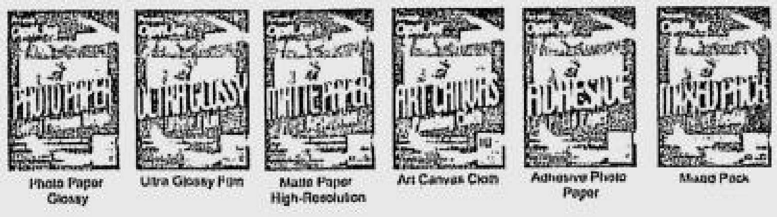

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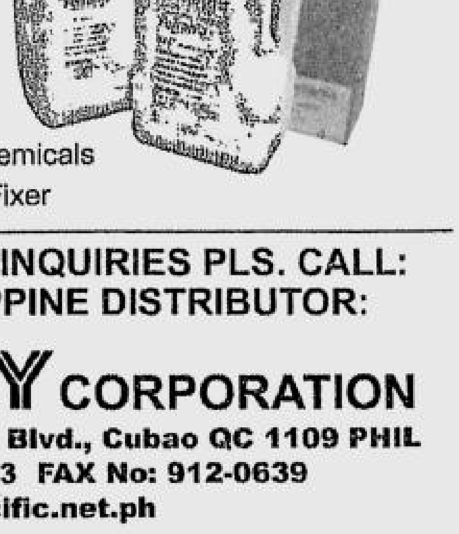

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Military says it is prepared for ARMM polls amid rumors of violence

JOLO, Sulu—Amid rumors of violence if the regional elections push through on Nov. 26, Col. Romeo Tolentino, 104th Army Brigade commander, assured the people of Sulu that the military is prepared to handle such eventuality.

The rumors of violence started spreading after Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Nur Misuari spoke at a recent "Bangsamoro Congress" in Silangkan town, where the ousted chair of the Moro National Liberation Front delivered a defiant speech expressing his opposition to the forthcoming elections.

"We are more than prepared in case something happens. We have already alerted all branches of the armed forces. We will use all the capability of the armed forces," Tolentino said.

Misuari, who is not a candidate, claimed that the holding of the scheduled polls is a violation of the 1996 GRP-MNLF peace agreement.

In the same gathering, he also announced the unification of his faction with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that is now holding peace talks with the government, claiming that their joined forces would continue to pursue the "original vision" of a separate Islamic state.

But Tolentino, irked with Misuari's harsh criticism of government despite his being the highest ranking official in the ARMM, had equally strong words for the governor.

"We cannot always blackmail the government by threatening to go to war," he said in a radio interview Wednesday. "(I hope) when they go to war, he will remain, and see what will happen, and not run away and go to another country, and sacrifice the people," alluding to reports that Misuari will be abroad during the elections, with orders to his followers to disrupt the process.

"This election has been long delayed, (and) we must move forward. We should not be (held) hostage by ineptitude. What the government wants is (for) the money (to) go to the people, to development. He (Misuari) does not even want to be audited," Tolentino said.

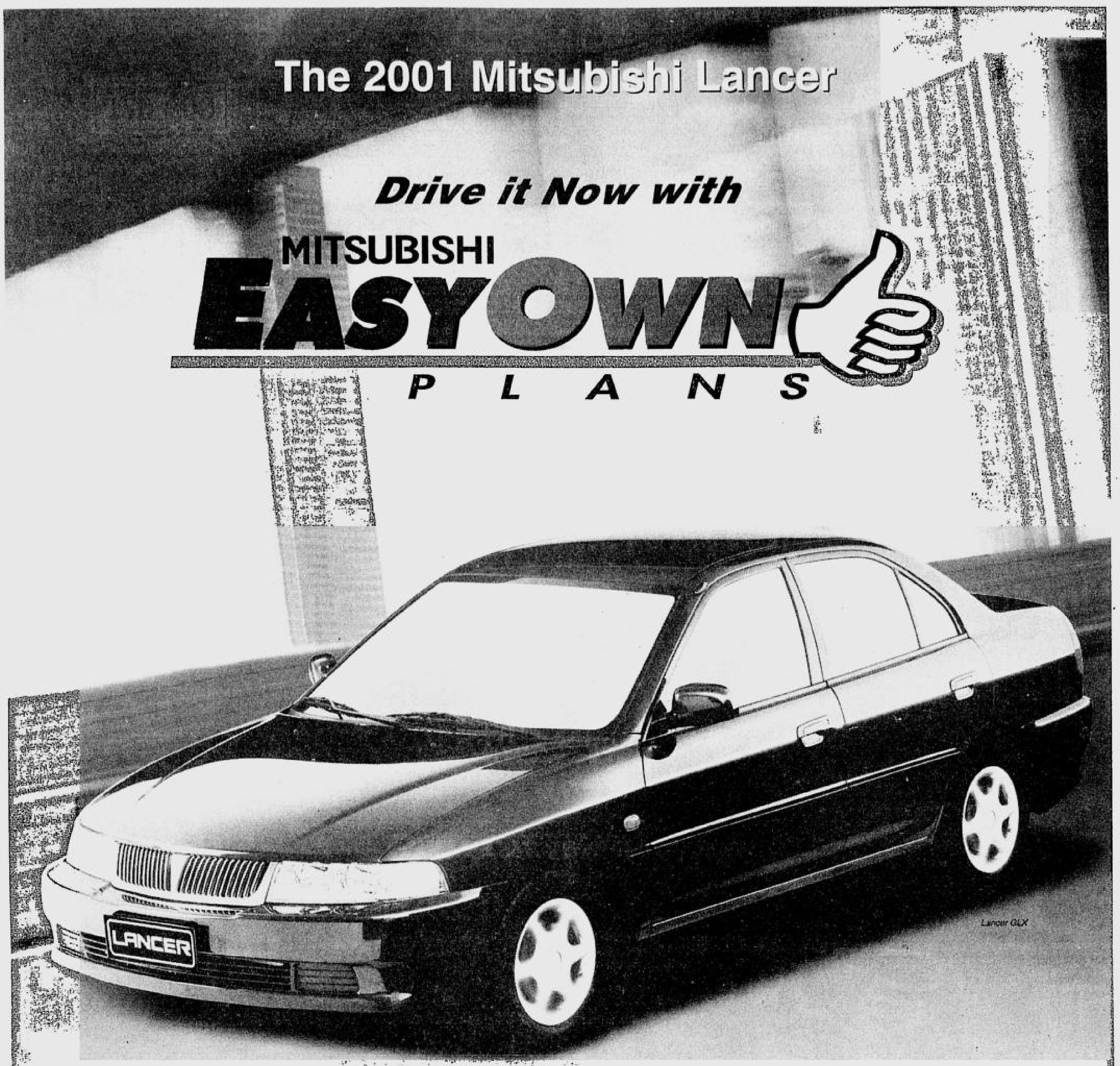
Published reports revealed that the Commission on Audit had discovered several millions in unliquidated cash advances in the ARMM.

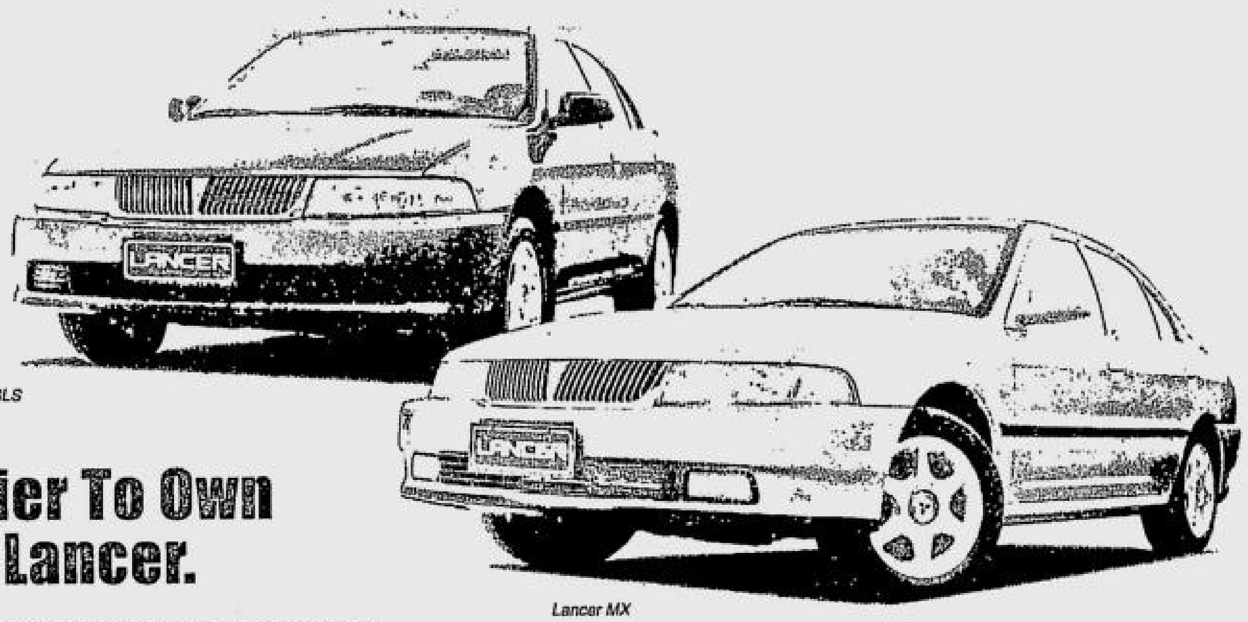
Replying to a question on the reported regional internal security force maintained by Misuari, Tolentino said that "in the (peace) agreement there should only be one armed force and one police force. We have the PNP that is the regional security force, we cannot allow a batch of these people (to form another)," he stressed.

He also belied reports from MNLF forces who claim to number some 20,000 that they had been told they would be integrated into the armed forces.

"I pity them for believing what is not true," Tolentino said.

Noralyn Mustafa, PDI Mindanao Bureau





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Greenpeace to label GMO products

LUCENA CITY—For the public to celebrate the Christmas season free of food products contaminated with "genetically modified organisms," Greenpeace activists said they would conduct "GMO labeling patrols" in major supermarkets nationwide. "Greenpeace labeling patrols" will saturate major supermarkets in major urban centers to "discreetly" slap labels on food products that contain genetically modified organisms or GMOs.

Von Hernandez, campaign manager for Greenpeace Southeast Asia told the INQUIRER that they would conduct the information mobilization in the absence of a government mandatory labeling policy for genetically altered food products in the country.

"Most Filipino households, no matter how poor, would indulge on foods for their traditional celebration of Christmas. At least we would be able to help them distinguish which food products from the grocery shelves are safe to eat," Hernandez said in a phone interview. Aside from their "labeling mission," Hernandez said, Greenpeace activists will also conduct public information campaign through different forums in the province.

"We will make our appeal through local radios, televisions and provincial community papers to deliver our message across in time for the holiday celebration," he added.

Last week, the Greenpeace activists demonstrated inside a popular supermarket chain outlet in Metro Manila and attached stickers marked "GMO contaminated" in popular food products, particularly several brands of baby food, infant formula, hotdog and other snack items they earlier confirmed to contain GMOs in laboratory tests.

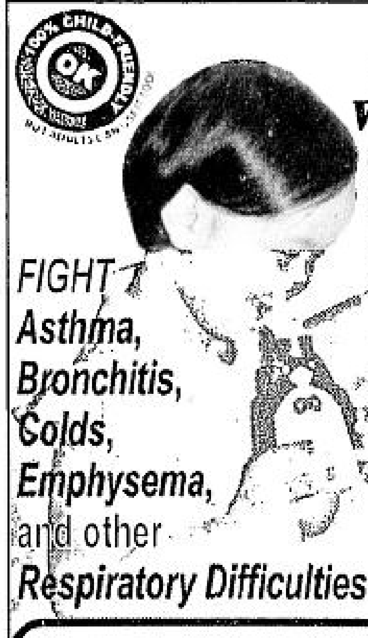
Beau Baconguis, genetic engineering campaigner for Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said in a statement, that they were taking action, "because we believe that Filipino consumers have a right to choose, whether they want to eat genetically modified food or not."

Baconguis has blamed the government's failure to establish an effective labeling system for genetically altered food products.

"Unfortunately, government neglect is robbing consumers of their right to know what they are eating and prevents them from exercising their option to reject food items contaminated with GMOs," she pointed out.

"Given the lethargic and seemingly apathetic response of the government on this issue, we are also challenging retailers and food producers to decide whether they want to cheat consumers by hiding behind the inadequacies of the present system or respect their rights by providing truthful and reliable information on all of their products," she added. Hernandez also stressed that at the very least, "people must have the right to know which food products are genetically manipulated, especially given the unknown impacts of this experiment with our food on human health and the environment."

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



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SC under pressure from Erap pals, foes

(Fro page A1)

dismayed," he said. "We are alarmed."

The Supreme Court is still set to meet tomorrow in an en banc session to review the plunder case, but according to Plunder Watch, a coalition of groups tracking the progress of the plunder charges filed against the former President, members of the high tribunal are locked in a 6-6 stalemate.

Text messages that swept the country yesterday even alleged that eight justices, or a majority of the court, had already voted to declare the plunder law unconstitutional. One widely circulated message urged anti-Estrada quarters to let the eight justices "feel our anger."

But San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, a son of the ex-President, said the text messages were a reprise of the "mob rule" used against pro-Estrada senators during his aborted impeachment trial.

"This country will go nowhere if we allow this to continue—this constant threat by the so-called civil society groups. We can no longer correct what is wrong," he said.

Estrada camp

Yesterday, at the historic Pinaglabanan Church in their bailiwick town of San Juan, the Estrada family and their supporters sponsored a "Mass for Justice" seeking just such a declaration.

A nullified plunder law would allow Estrada and his son former Mayor Jinggoy Estrada to return home. The other charges they are facing—two counts of perjury and one count of illegal use of alias—are bailable offenses.

Fr. Larry Faraon, one of six officiating priests at the Mass, asked God in his homily to "touch the people who will dispense justice" in the country.

"Now that we're powerless, we can only rely on prayers," said Estrada's son, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito.

"I'm very hopeful that the Supreme Court justices will vote in favor of President Estrada. I'm praying for that," said the deposed President's wife, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito.

Her husband "will just go home," she said, when asked by reporters what would happen should her prayers be granted.

Some 1,500 relatives, friends and supporters filled the St. John the Baptist Church near the Pinaglabanan Shrine for the 3 p.m. service.

Joining Senator Ejercito and Mayor Ejercito at the pew were the ex-President's 96-year-old mother Doña Mary, his brother Jessie, and his close celebrity friend, action star Fernando Poe Jr., who came with his wife, actress Susan Roces.

Also present was Precy, wife of Jinggoy, and their three children.

Absent was Jackie, Estrada's daughter by Senator Ejercito, and her husband Beaver Lopez, a scion of the family which owns ABS-CBN, Meralco and a host of other companies.

Feverish talk

The text messages prompted feverish talk in some circles. The KMU's Malunes said workers tended to believe the messages, adding that it was not at all unfounded.

The KMU has also learned, through what he described as Supreme Court insiders, that two other justices are being lured by the defense to favor the Estrada petition, Malunes said.

Quoting reports, he said the Estrada camp is using P500 million to have the plunder law declared unconstitutional. He said the amount was part of the fund used for the failed power grab during the May 1 assault on Malacañang.

Fishermen, farmers, drivers and other laborers nationwide have been conducting spirited discussions about the rumor, he added. "We are dismayed. We are alarmed."

Even students, who have taken a low profile after Estrada's ouster, are now only "too eager" to articulate their views on the impending Supreme Court decision, said Cristina Palabay, chair of the National Union of Students in the Philippines.

"After Edsa II, many thought students have become detached from issues," she said. "We're back and we want to know the truth."

Like the workers, students believe there is truth to Plunder Watch's exposé, Palabay said, quoting reports from "reliable" NUSP sources. "When there's smoke, there's fire."

Student groups, she said, are set to conduct a series of forums to discuss the implications of a "possible" Supreme Court vote favoring the petition.

Dr. Carol Araullo, convenor of Plunder Watch, said emotions were high over the issue since it is the "turning point in the plunder case against Estrada and in Philippine democracy."

"People are concerned because as much as possible, they don't want to return to the streets anymore. They want the democratic systems to work," she told the INQUIRER.

De Vera warned of a crisis far worse than the "jueteng" scandal that led to People Power II if the rumor turned out to be true.

"People wouldn't just swallow any Supreme Court decision that is basically wrong. Sovereignty must prevail."

Araullo said the defense was bent on having the plunder law declared unconstitutional to practically exonerate Estrada in a crime punishable by death.

In the court of public opinion, she said, Estrada would be deemed an innocent man should the Supreme Court favor his lawyers' petition.

Sandigan trial

In spite of all the talk, however, the Sandiganbayan will proceed with Estrada's plunder trial.

Estrada and son Jinggoy are again ordered to appear at 1 p.m. before the 3rd Division, which had excused them in the last two hearings last week.

Defense lawyers are expected to wrap up its cross-examination of prosecution witness Carlos Arellano, former chair of the Social Security System.

Arellano testified on the alleged pressure exerted by then-President Estrada on the SSS to buy a large volume of Belle Corp. shares in October 1999.

The plunder charge accuses Estrada of pocketing P189.7 million in commissions from that transaction.

'Caucasian' corpse found in Zambo del Sur

(From page A1)

covered in Pisaan still needed to be identified.

Both Jimenez and Burzawa said the body had tattoos on both arms which, they claimed, Pierantoni did not have. The left arm sported an "ADB Din" tattoo, while a tattoo reading "JMC Din" was on the right arm. Burzawa said he was sure Pierantoni did not have a tattoo in any part of his body.

The corpse, about 5'5" in height and apparently about 40 years old, was missing its upper front teeth and wore a bracelet of ethnic design and green underwear. Burzawa said Pierantoni was "not fond" of wearing bracelets.

Jimenez was accompanied by Fr. Jerry Sheehy, Pierantoni's superior in the Sacred Heart of Jesus congregation, and Burzawa.

Antonia Ledenio, the convent cook, could also not say if it was Pierantoni's body or not. Two nuns who knew the Italian, Sisters Linda Obemaga and Pilar Quemada, both said the man's features resembled those of the priest.

The body was discovered by three fishers in a mangrove in Sitio Banigan in Barangay Pisaan on Wednesday, but Insp. Rolando Cruz, the town's police chief, said the fishers reported the body to the police only yesterday.

When found, the cadaver's feet were tied to a mangrove tree. Its face was beyond recognition while its chest was already decomposing. Cruz said they also found white pajamas hanging from a mangrove tree a few meters away from the body.

Sources said it is possible that the body could be that of Pierre Belanger, a Canadian resident of Hagonoy, Zamboanga del Sur, who has been missing since Nov. 3.

Pisaan Island, some 20 kilometers away from Dimataling, is a known lair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's 4th Infantry Battalion.

False reports

The military earlier reported that it had safely recovered the 44-year-old missionary, who had been abducted by rogue Muslim guerrillas 35 days ago.

"The reports that the priest was released came from a military informer. We are correcting (the) reports," said Brig. Gen. Angel Atutubo, deputy commander of the Army's First Infantry Division based in nearby Pagadian City.

"Father Giuseppe was not released as earlier reported," he added.

But it was Atutubo himself, who is also the chief of Task Group Giuseppe, who told the INQUIRER by long-distance telephone that his men had rescued Pierantoni yesterday at noon.

"According to my men, they were already in custody of the priest," he said.

But Servando said Atutubo was quoted out of context. "Actually the troops recovered a floating body, that's all," Servando said.

The Pentagon kidnap group has been blamed for Pierantoni's abduction.

In Pikit, North Cotabato, government forces continued with its pursuit operations against Pentagon bandits as another suspected kidnapper was killed and a soldier was wounded.

At the same time, more villagers from barangays near the Liguasan marsh continued to arrive at the town plaza in Pikit and other evacuation centers.

Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said another soldier was wounded during a 30-minute firefight Sunday dawn near Barangay Bulod. He identified the wounded soldier as Sgt. Herminiano Gumapac of the 40th Infantry Battalion.

Ando, quoting a report from the Army's 40th IB, said civilians from Bulod saw a dead gang member beside a road.

"Some villagers refused to leave because they are protecting their work animals and farm equipment," Ando told radio station dxMS.

Eid Kabalu, spokesperson of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, said MILF forces remained in a defensive position near Barangay Bulod and did not fire a single shot.

But he warned the military that if the operations against MILF positions continued, "we may be forced to retaliate."

"So far the fighting is not in MILF areas," Kabalu told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

Relief assistance

Imelda Balios, Pikit social welfare chief, said relief assistance for some 24,500 displaced individuals was expected to arrive today when the government's social welfare office opens.

Most of the evacuees are Muslims who are observing the holy month of Ramadan.

Private and international relief agencies immediately sent relief workers in an effort to prevent sickness and famine in evacuation sites. Among them were the Accion Hambre, Medicins Sans Frontiers, Philippine National Red Cross and Church-based relief organizations.

Fr. Bert Layson, OMI, parish priest of Pikit, also opened the parish gymnasium as a temporary shelter for the refugees. He has been coordinating with the military to ensure the safety of civilians.

The Bologna native, a member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus missionary mission, was snatched outside the church by rogue Muslim guerrillas on Oct. 17.

The kidnappers had demanded an unspecified ransom for his freedom, having also freed a kidnapped Chinese man last month.

Church leaders rejected the ransom demand, but sent a humanitarian mission to the kidnappers' hideout to deliver clothes, shoes and medicine for Pierantoni. Local officials were also understood to have made contacts with the abductors.

Pierantoni arrived in Mindanao 10 years ago. Church officials said he had escaped another kidnapping threat in his previous assignment in the parish of Bacolod.

Foreign Christian missionaries are prime kidnapping targets in certain parts in Mindanao, home to most of the country's 3.5 million Muslims. Two Muslim groups are waging armed secessionist campaigns in the region.

Another Italian priest, Luciano Benedetti, was kidnapped by rogue Muslim rebels in 1999 but was freed unharmed several months later.

An Irish Catholic priest, Rufus Halley, was murdered by gunmen with links to Muslim guerrillas in the town of Malabang in August. ***With reports from Martin Marfil, Julie Alipala-Inot and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and AFP***

Doctor, 'miracle worker' vie for top ARMM post

(From page A1)

The doctor, 55-year-old Parouk Hussin, is the incumbent presidential adviser for Muslim Mindanao and the Macapagal administration's official candidate. The mayor, 41-year-old Ibrahim "Toto" Paglas, was a virtual unknown even in the ARMM until the United Nations and international broadcast giant CNN hailed him as a "miracle worker."

On Nov. 26, some 2 million voters will inaugurate the autonomous region's post-Misuari era by choosing a new regional governor. The ARMM now consists of five provinces—Sulu, Maguindanao, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur—and the city of Marawi.

The stakes are about as high as they get. Assistance from European and Arab countries, for instance, slowed down when their representatives admitted they were not too happy with the way financial aid was being spent under Misuari's lack of effective leadership.

"We will have to withhold assistance until a better leader emerges," an Arab diplomat whose country's contributions to Muslim Mindanao have been massive, said in February this year.

A Western diplomat added that security problems were yet another reason why they are not able to continue sending material assistance. "There are major clashes now, unlike last year. The insecurity is spreading. Not a frontal attack, but it is difficult to move, and mayors cannot guarantee the security of our aid workers. Our projects operate in a lot of barangays, but recommendations from the military and the barangay captains tell us not to go there because of the fragile situation."

"We need a road map for an agreement between all the parties—the MNLF, the (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), the government. Now it's no peace, no war, like the abduction of the Italian priest. The Pentagon, the MNLF, cat and mouse. It could be linked to local politics, but for outsiders, that is not too tangible, so people are not eager to take any risks. We have had to postpone several missions to Mindanao."

Some aborted projects: a Belgian rural development project, German health sector and family planning projects, European Union Upper Land Development operating in remote barangays in Cotabato, and a new one for Central Mindanao called Starcen involving agrarian reform, "although several datus are blocking land reform," the diplomat added.

The situation in the ARMM can be described as desperate. "The people there eat grass because in places, there is nothing else to eat," former Libyan Ambassador Rajab Abdul Azzarouq has lamented. Diplomats restrain themselves from expressing political choices in elections, but Azzarouq, a close friend of Muslim Mindanao and many government officials, is unabashed in his admiration for Hussin.

Diplomatic choice

When the city of Jolo was reduced to rubble in 1974, Hussin became a rebel. "The military started hunting down everyone suspect, even professionals. I escaped from my practice to the jungle, joining the fighters as a medical doctor," Hussin said.

"After several months in the jungle, and many encounters later, I escaped to Manila. I worked at the Chinese General Hospital while preparing my travel documents for Saudi Arabia."

Working first in Libya as a resident physician at the National Insurance Hospital, Hussin then sought political asylum in Sweden.

Though Misuari has accused him of not being a Filipino citizen, Hussin said that on the contrary, "Misuari has lived abroad longer than anyone else among us." Hussin holds a Philippine diplomatic passport.

The Swedish ambassador to the Philippines, Mr. Uls Hakonson, has said that "Dr. Hussin was never asked to relinquish his Filipino citizenship when he was given Swedish citizenship because he was a political refugee seeking political asylum. He has never relinquished his loyalty to the Philippines."

While practicing as a physician in Sweden, Dr. Hussin served as the MNLF's foreign affairs committee chair, attending Organization of Islamic Conference meetings, and representing the MNLF in Europe and Africa.

For two decades, Dr. Hussin traveled to various countries in quest of peace for Mindanao. These included shuttling between Libya and Manila, from which ensued the Tripoli Agreement of 1976, and continuing peace talks in Jeddah, Karachi and in Jakarta. In the meantime, he married a Yugoslavian nurse by whom he has four boys.

Dr. Hussin returned to the country in 1995, and on Sept. 2, 1996, the Peace Agreement was finally signed between the Philippine government and the MNLF." President Fidel Ramos wanted me to join his official family with a Cabinet position, but Nur Misuari objected vehemently." In 1998, he was nonetheless named assistant secretary in the Office of the President. In March this year, he became presidential adviser for Muslim Mindanao concerns.

A European diplomat said, "I have a lot of sympathy for him, his solidity, the respect he deserves because he went through all the difficult times." Another envoy said that "This is a person who was extremely useful for many years during the peace process. He deserves recognition for that work, a very trusted person."

Miracle town

Paglas fits the profile of an accidental politician.

Although the grandson of one of the pioneering Muslim senators, Gen. Salipada Pendatun, and a nephew of MILF Chair Salamat Hashim, Paglas described himself as more of a businessman than anything else.

After college in Manila, he returned to his native Maguindanao province to develop his family's farm and supervise a local construction outfit. Seven years later, in 1988, he was elected mayor of Datu Paglas town.

Datu Paglas, formerly named Buluan, used to be "notorious" for its local political feuds and peace and order problems. Known for its local bolo makers (thus the name buluan), the municipality transformed itself over the years into peace zones and banana plantations.

Through his chairmanship of the Paglas Group of Companies (engaged in farming, transportation, recruitment), and partnering with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United Nations, and countries like Iran and Malaysia, Paglas was able to turn Datu Paglas into what Asian writers have called "Miracle Town," an area with 100-percent employment.

Edgar Bullecer, UN senior adviser and special project manager, said the Datu Paglas experience has helped combat "misconceptions" about investing in war-torn Mindanao.

In 1999, Paglas was invited to the World Conference on Governance to present the story of the town's transformation from a war zone to an economic zone. The story was cited in CNN. The next year, Paglas received a Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) award. He was the only awardee from outside Metro Manila.

Hunt for Bin Laden narrowed down to 78 square km

(From page A1)

bombardments," Qanoon said. "According to my information, Bin Laden is still in . . . Maruf. He has training camps there and strong underground bunkers."

The conflicting reports came after London's Sunday Times newspaper quoted intelligence sources as saying US and British special forces had narrowed the search for Bin Laden to 78 square km of rugged terrain in southern Afghanistan.

British and US commandos have been dropped across the southern approach to the area to prevent his escape to Pakistan, said the newspaper, quoting defense sources.

Bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network had been thrown into disarray after the capture or killing of some of its leaders, including Mohammed Atef.

Zaeef confirmed to AIP that Atef, believed to be al-Qaida's military chief, was "martyred in the US bombing of Kabul."

Atef, a former Egyptian policeman in his mid-50s with a $5-million US government reward on his head, was accused of organizing the Sept. 11 attacks, as well the 1998 bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and assaults on US troops in Somalia in 1993.

Atef, considered to be Bin Laden's closest and most trusted aide, is widely believed to have been in charge of the al-Qaida training camps and "the main link with other organizations, supporters and donors," according to a Pakistani source.

The source, who is close to Bin Laden, said the tall, powerfully built and heavily bearded Atef "was like Osama's right-hand. If Atef is killed, Osama has lost his right arm."

The two also had family ties since February, when one of Bin Laden's sons married Atef's daughter, intelligence sources have said.

US air strikes

On Sunday, one US B-52 and three F-16s bombarded Taliban positions near Kunduz for several hours as hundreds of Northern Alliance troops, backed by at least two tanks, were seen deploying on the frontline, an AFP correspondent reported.

The Northern Alliance says nearly 30,000 al-Qaida and Taliban troops, a third of them Arabs, Pakistanis or Chechens, are holed up in the Kunduz area.

The Sunday Telegraph reported that the al-Qaida slaughtered 150 Afghan Taliban troops on Friday to prevent them from defecting to the Alliance.

"A foreign commander gave the order for 150 local Afghan Taliban to be killed because they wanted to surrender," a civilian who fled Kunduz on Saturday told the paper. "They showed them no mercy."

He said the massacre followed the defection of 1,000 Afghans under Taliban General Mirai Nasery.

AIP reported at least 30 people were killed on Sunday when US planes struck Shamshad, a town 8 km from the Pakistan border in Nangarhar province.

It also said at least 62 others, many students of a religious school, died in air strikes on Friday and Saturday on Khost, in the province of Paktia.

Surrender

In Kandahar, tribal leaders renewed efforts to negotiate a peaceful surrender of the southern city.

"The atmosphere . . . is tense but there are no reports of fighting," said Hamid Karzai, one of three Pashtun tribal elders trying to coax so-called moderate Taliban to defect. ***AFP***

Business should take look at itself

(From page A1)

The resolutions passed by the conference form the agenda that the business community will propose to the summit. Whatever the merits of the resolutions, it can't be said that the businessmen are guilty of want for preparation.

The key themes of their agenda include:

● The call by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the largest business chamber in the country, for an end to political bickering in government and sensationalism in the press. These institutions were blamed for shifting attention away from urgent economic and social problems by emphasizing scandals, crimes and conflict (in short, "negative" news). Negative news, they claim, scare and drive away investments.

● A call by the Federation of Philippine Industries for a one-year moratorium on "adversarial politics" and for the scrutiny of "free-wheeling democracy and media," which are blamed for the failure of the Philippines to achieve its full economic potential and for its being an economic laggard in Asia.

● A moratorium by Congress in the passage of new economic legislation, except the most urgent ones, and implementation of economic-oriented laws such as the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act—a centerpiece reform law in the Estrada administration that merely paid lip service to it by starving it of budgetary resources.

Media

Before I throw the spotlight on these key proposals, some of which suffer from erroneous diagnosis, let me first address issues on which I agree with them. The emphasis given by the press on scandals, on crimes and very personally oriented news about citizen's private lives that have no bearing whatever on public affairs is unique in the Philippine press.

In the broadsheets of advanced democracies, this type of news is buried in the inside pages. They don't need to hog the precious front page space.

The public has a right to know about events that affect them—including crimes and scandals—but relegating these to the inside pages does not deprive them of basic information on these events.

Our media have an overload of news on crime, scandal and political contentions. The overload distorts priorities and does not help form an informed public opinion.

I believe newspapers can sell as well by shifting emphasis away from crime, scandals and political guerrilla war, and presenting on the front page a more diversified profile of news about what's happening to the country and the human race everyday.

The businessmen have also a point in proposing that the papers stop printing gore or human mayhem on the front page. The US press' coverage of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center kept the gory scenes of human carnage away from papers and yet drove home the impact of the human tragedy.

I disagree with the business conference, however, that these newspaper lapses involve ethics. Ethics has nothing to do with this emphasis.

I have the sense that what the businessmen are really criticizing, when they deplore "irresponsible" and "unethical" journalism, is the emphasis of the press on the more dramatic aspects of the news and its value judgment in determining the hierarchy of what is important and what is not important to serve the public's right to know.

The argument, however, that this emphasis on "sensational" and "negative" news is responsible for scaring investors away and for the economic malaise stands on shaky grounds. This sensationalism has been a feature of the press during periods of low and high economic growths—so it can't explain the poor economic performance.

Our economic slowdown is a result of a complex combination of variables, including the global economic downturn. Despite its faults, the press cannot hide reports and serious charges of corruption, without being untrue to its responsibility to disclose the truth.

Romantic notion

The call for a one-year moratorium on adversarial politics and press is a romantic notion that floats high up in the stratosphere.

Questions arise: During the moratorium, who decides what is adversarial and negative? What are the politicians and the media supposed to do?

In the preparation of the consensus agenda, how can ideas and concepts for rejuvenation be tested except in the crucible of open and informed debate?

The proposal to examine the responsibility of "free-wheeling democracy" and the "adversarial" media for the national malaise attacks the fundamental basis of democracy—which is adversarial relations among institutions in a system of checks and balances. It is a task for a constitutional convention.

The proposal's logical destination is authoritarianism. I don't think Raul Concepcion has this in mind. If I read him correctly, what he is calling attention to is that in our adversarial political culture, we have misunderstood democracy as an arena of endless debates that put an accent on individual rights and ignore the good of the national community.

Many have pointed out that Philippine democracy is seriously flawed by the emphasis on rights over responsibility.

A moratorium cannot correct this wrong emphasis. Somehow, one gets the sense from the businessmen's resolutions that they are highlighting the blemishes on the skins of other sectors while ignoring theirs.

They deplore corruption. But in private business transactions with government, it takes two to conclude a corrupt deal.

The business community says that a moratorium on sensational news and political bickering would permit the administration to focus on economic recovery and programs for alleviation of poverty. A close examination of the resource allocation of private business is likely to reveal that social programs linked to poverty alleviation have a low priority.

Private business puts the responsibility of social amelioration entirely on the shoulders of government, without assuming heavier social responsibility.

The private sector seeks to be left alone to make profits. It wants the political sector and the press to change their culture of "negativism" and "adversarialism," but the private sector seems to believe it is beyond change.

GMA denies secret pact with Bush in the works

(From page A1)

Manila were quoted as saying that a Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) being negotiated with the Unite States provides for the virtual restoration of the former US bases.

James Kelley, US assistant secretary of state for Asia-Pacific affairs, has confirmed that Philippine and US defense officials had been working on an MLSA for some time.

But Kelly denied that the MLSA would allow US forces' use of the former Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base as permanent bases.

He said Washington was quite happy with the Visiting Forces Agreement and was "not pressing for more."

Sources at the Department of Foreign Affairs, however, claimed that the proposed MLSA was simply a renamed version of the Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (Acsa) that had been under negotiation since November 1992 but was never signed because of strong opposition from the Senate.

It was the same Senate that earlier on Sept. 16, 1991 rejected the renewal of the RP-US Military Bases Agreement, thereby forcing the withdrawal of the US military from its bases in the Philippines.

In Manila, former Sen. Wigberto Tañada yesterday demanded that the draft of the proposed MLSA be made public.

"They cannot keep this from the public. While they (the government) may be already discussing it, it is their obligation to let the public know about the MLSA," Tañada said in a phone interview.

He noted that like the aborted Acsa, the new defense proposal was only confirmed after "secret negotiations."

Sonia Soto, chair of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya, criticized Kelly and government officials for "saying in effect that the transit, refueling and re-supply of US visiting troops were merely routine activities."

"They want us to believe that these are normal, acceptable activities when they in fact are not in our country that bans foreign troops," Soto said.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said the MLSA might be aimed at "legalizing the broad commitment of support" given by the Macapagal administration for the US-led war in Afghanistan.

He said it was the United States' devious way of regaining the privileges it had when it operated military bases in the Philippines.

"The US is obviously exploiting the Philippine government's servile attitude towards the US," he said.

The MLSA, if approved, would negate the Senate's 1991 rejection of the bases agreement, he said.

Must be opposed

Prof. Roland Simbulan, chair of the Nuclear-Free Philippines Coalition, said the MLSA must be opposed as it would reverse all the gains of Philippine nationalism.

"The US is trying to use the anti-terror campaign to reverse all the past and recent gains and victories of Philippine nationalism," he said.

Soto said the issue involved nothing less than the abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty which has been a "convenient instrument" used by US and Philippine officials in justifying US presence here.

The treaty was adopted in 1951 to meet post-war threats like the expanding Soviet Union. It provides for the Philippines and the United States to come to each other's defense in case of armed attack upon the territory or Armed Forces of either in the Pacific region.

After the pullout of its forces in 1991, the United States concluded a Visiting Forces Agreement with the Philippines. The VFA allowed for the temporary visit of US troops for joint military exercises.

The Constitution bans foreign military troops and nuclear weapons in the country.

Aid sought

Foreign Undersecretary Lauro Baja, who is with the presidential party, said that what Manila was seeking from Washington was help in fighting terrorists.

Baja said he hoped the military would succeed in getting the military hardware such as speedboats and helicopters at "friendship prices."

Ms Macapagal said she would also push for the final approval by the US Congress of the long-delayed Filipino Veterans Equity bill that would give full benefits to Filipino war veterans, similar to those being enjoyed by US veterans.

Talks with US officials

In her talks with Bush, Ms Macapgal will be joined by Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, National Security Adviser Roilo Gomez, Philippine Ambassador to Washington Albert del Rosario, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Speaker Jose de Venecia, presidential adviser on international competitiveness Roberto Romulo and Baja.

Ms Macapagal is also scheduled to meet with US Vice President Richard Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, Commerce Secretary Donald Evans and National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice.

Ms Macapagal will also be meeting with officials of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the US Agency for International Development.

On the eve of her departure for Washington, Ms Macapagal attended a memorial service at St. Patrick's Cathedral for the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The cathedral on New York's Fifth Ave. was filled to capacity with some 4,000 Filipino-Americans attending.

The President asked the Filipino-Americans to visit the Philippines as often as they could and to bring along their American friends.

She also urged them to continue to send dollars home and to adopt a barangay, a school or an NGO.

"You will always be a Filipino to the consulate, to the Philippine government," she said. ***With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Short legs linked to diabetes

(From page A1)

researchers said on Tuesday.

They found that men with short legs have an increased risk of heart disease and a condition that can lead to diabetes.

"Leg length is inversely associated with the risk of coronary heart disease and with components of the insulin resistance syndrome among adults," said Professor George Smith, of the University of Bristol in southwest England.

Insulin resistance syndrome is a precursor to diabetes.

Smith, whose study involved 2,512 men in Wales who were monitored for 15 years, believes the link between leg length and disease risk supports the theory that poor nutrition and genetic factors contribute to heart disease and diabetes.

"This provides supportive evidence for the hypothesis that impaired growth during childhood increases the risk of these conditions," Smith said in a report in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

Smith and his colleagues said the men with short legs in the study had higher blood fat levels, as well as large amounts of a blood-clotting factor.

These are both associated with a higher risk of heart disease—a leading cause of death in many countries.

Men with shorter legs also had more heart attacks than their taller counterparts during the study.

The scientists called for further studies to determine the impact of growth in childhood on adult health. Poor nutrition in childhood is a cause of below-average growth. ***Reuters***

18 soldiers killed in NPA ambush

(From page A1)

Company, and his nine wounded men were rushed to the military hospital in Panacan, Davao City.

Col. Jose Mabanta, the Army spokesperson in Manila, confirmed field reports that 18 soldiers were killed in the three-hour firefight.

Mabanta said the soldiers also lost 21 firearms to the rebels.

Four Army battalions, or about 2,000 troops, and several attack helicopters have reportedly been sent to track down the NPA group that burned down the telecommunications facilities of Dole Philippines, Philcom, PLDT and Liberty Telecom on Nov. 12.

The four firms have reportedly refused to pay the "revolutionary tax" demanded by the NPA group.

The military, however, claimed that 25 NPA rebels were killed in two earlier encounters.

Maj. Alexis Gopico, chief of the 8th Special Forces Battalion, said 15 rebels were killed when two attack helicopters pounded the NPA camp in Sitio Spur Dos on Friday.

Candava said 10 more rebels were killed in a firefight in Barangay Aliwagwag on Saturday.

But the military officials said there was no actual body count, adding the NPA group must have carried their dead away in its retreat.

The military also claimed to have recovered two trucks loaded with more than 500 sacks of rice that the NPA rebels had reportedly seized from local traders of Baganga town.

The rebels are allegedly led by Roberto Rosete alias Ka Alex, head of the NPA front committee based in Baganga.

The government has warned that the NPA, the 11,600-member armed wing of the underground Communist Party of the Philippines, is on the rebound as the military has been preoccupied with Muslim separatism elsewhere on Mindanao.

Peace talks between the Communists and the government were suspended after the rebels assassinated two legislators earlier this year.

The communist rebellion was launched in 1969. Military successes and factionalism reduced its armed strength to about 6,000 guerrillas in the early 1990s. ***With reports from Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Martin P. Marfil in Manila; and AFP***

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Lewis kayoes Rahman, regains WBC, IBF titles

LAS VEGAS—Lennox Lewis said it wasn't possible for him to lose a second time to Hasim Rahman, and he was right.

Lewis regained the WBC and IBF heavyweight titles on a fourth-round knockout of Rahman on Saturday night.

The end came 1:29 into the round when Lewis landed a left-right and then a crashing right that dropped Rahman on his back.

"I never saw the punch coming," Rahman said.

The punch was every bit as devastating as the right hand Rahman used to knock out Lewis on April 22.

All three judges gave Lewis the first three rounds. The AP gave Lewis two of the first three.

According to a CompuBox punch analysis, Lewis landed 72 of 144 punches thrown and Rahman got home with 48 of 105.

Lewis became the fourth man to regain the heavyweight championship from the fighter to whom he had lost it. The others were Floyd Patterson, Muhammad Ali and Evander Holyfield.

It was mostly a battle of left jabs until Lewis crashed home the hard right that won it for him.

Lewis, looking much trimmer than he did when he lost the title to Rahman in South Africa, cut his opponent over the left eye in the first round and shook him with a couple of right hands in the third.

Twenty seconds into the fourth round, Lewis landed another hard right, as if signifying the end was at hand for Rahman.

After Lewis knocked Rahman down, Lewis pounded his chest. After the fight, he said Rahman should change his name from Hasim to "Has Been."

In the buildup to the fight, Rahman angered Lewis by making insinuations about his sexuality, and the two were kept apart in the last pre-fight press conference and at the weigh-in.

The stunning ending preserved the 36-year-old Lewis' career. He said if he couldn't beat Rahman, there was no sense in continuing to fight.

Lewis had to go to court to have Rahman give him an immediate rematch, and that provoked Rahman.

Lewis now could get a rich fight with Mike Tyson. There is talk of Tyson fighting Ray Mercer on Jan. 19, possibly in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

LEWIS (right) lands the knockout punch in the fourth round. AP

A couple of days before the fight, Rahman had said: "I feel a knockout."

The only thing he felt Saturday night before 10,500 fans was a knockout punch.

The 6-foot-5 (2-meter) Lewis, who weighed 246 1/2 pounds (110 kilograms) - 6 1/2 pounds (3 kilograms) under his career-high weight in the first fight—looked relaxed and confident from the start.

Many boxing observers felt Lewis might fight cautiously, as he has done several times in the past. Lewis had a lot of snap in his jab, however, and beginning in the third round, he started firing his right with confidence and authority.

"I definitely wasn't gun shy," Lewis said. "I got him in the fourth round, so I'm one up on him.

Rahman, 236 pounds (106 kilograms), landed several good jabs in the first two rounds, but never got in a punch that rattled Lewis. *AP*

Xavier's Tan Ho sparkles in Penang

JOSHUA Tan Ho of Xavier School was crowned boys' 10-under singles and doubles champion in the Penang open International Juniors Tennis Championships in Malaysia recently.

Tan Ho won the singles title over compatriot Patrick Ken Arevalo of Mariano Marcos Memorial School, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 and teamed up with Arevalo to clinch the doubles crown over Songwut of Thailand and Niyon Ooi of Malaysia, 6-3, 6-1.

In the girls division, Bambi Zoleta of Mary Hill College defeated Jessica Agra of Colegio San Agustin in the finals, 6-2, 6-2. She and Agra won the doubles title over Malaysians Charmaine Tan and Saidah Athrirah, 6-2, 6-2.

Bambi's elder sister Bien bagged the 14-under title over Malaysian Premila Vadivelo, 6-1, 6-3. Bien and Ivy de Castro of Miriam College took the doubles title via a 6-3, 6-3 decision over Mary Ngiam and Low Wan Ching.

Melissa Orteza of DLS-Zobel, Juan Felipe Mayor of Kalibo Sunyatsen School, Daniel Luis Macalino of Ateneo and Raymond Villarete of La Salle-Greenhills were the other members of the Philippine contingent headed by national coaches Johnny Jose and Ronald Martin.

RP kayakers snare 2 silvers, 7 bronzes

LENLEN ESCOLLANTE, a grizzled veteran who made the big shift from volleyball to kayaking, and teener April Penaloza led a Philippine haul of two silver and seven bronze medals in the recent third Southeast Asian Canoe Championships and first Junior Southeast Asian Canoe Championships in Malaysia.

Escollante, the best setter in 1993 when the Philippines clinched the SEA Games women's volleyball gold medal, is slowly reaping the fruits of the big shift she made only in 1998 by bagging the silver medal in the 200 meters senior singles and the 200 meters senior doubles events.

The 31-year-old Escollante had to settle with a borrowed kayak that was not exactly in top form in finishing behind Sarce Arrongar, the Indonesian strongwoman who swept all the gold medals staked in the women's category.

Escollante, a Seawoman First Class in the Philippine Navy, later teamed up with 14-year-old Penaloza and settled for the seniors doubles silver medal in the tournament participated in by eight Southeast Asian countries.

Escollante also captured three bronze medals in the 200 touring, 200 sprint and 500 touring—in the event staged at the picturesque Putrajaya Lake, a man-made lake Malaysia built in its bid to host major international watersports meets.

Does the government care?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

LEGENDARY sprinter Inocencia Solis died recently in her hometown in New Lucena, Iloilo City, at 67, broke and crippled by diabetes. Although running did not make her rich, she became a household name in the 1950s.

The first Filipina to be crowned Asia's fastest woman, Solis started her dominance of the sprints in 1954 when she won the bronze medal in the 200-meter dash of the second Asian Games in Manila in 1954. Then in 1958, she officially took the regional title by capturing first place in the centerpiece century dash in Tokyo Asiad, beating Japan's highly-regarded runners in a winning time of 12.4 seconds.

Solis had been on insulin and sickly since an operation on her left leg in 1994 at the Iloilo Mission Hospital. And except from a meager monthly allowance from the Philippine Sports Commission, she was virtually penniless when she died because she had spent a big amount of her PSC pension on medicines alone. A pity.

The government is responsible for the well-being of past sports achievers like Inocencia Solis and one way to show it cares is by implementing now the provisions of Republic Act 9064, also known as the "Sports benefits and Incentives act of 2001," which has been approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo last April 5, 2001. The cash rewards should be given when the beneficiary is still alive and not when he/she is already dead!

India netter beats Arevalo for crown

THIRD seed Sonal Phadke of India subdued local bet Czarina Mae Arevalo, 6-4, 6-2, yesterday to rule the women's singles crown of the P400,000 Philippine Columbian Association Open tennis meet at the PCA indoor courts.

The 19-year-old Phadke played aggressively and adjusted well to Arevalo's game to win the match and earn the P30,000 top purse.

"I did well today. I was confident of winning, maybe because I beat the top seed in the semifinals," said Phadke, who ousted compatriot Radhika Tulpele, 6-2, 6-1, last Friday.

"Arevalo is a very promising player. Her cross-court backhand is good. But I adjusted well to her game. When she tried to spin the ball higher I tried to keep my ball low," said Phadke, who is currently ranked No. 7 in India.

The world's No. 551 Indian baseliner had expected the crowd to favor Arevalo, who is the country's No. 1 player, but she simply ignored it.

Webb holds 3-stroke lead

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida—Karrie Webb carded a one-over-par 73 here Saturday in the third round of the season-ending LPGA Championship event, but she still has a three-stroke lead.

The Australian has led after each day and is now one round away from leading wire-to-wire in a tournament for the sixth time of her illustrious career.

Webb is at 5-under 211 for the tournament and hopes to walk away with her third win this year. For the 23rd time she holds the lead heading into a final round, winning 15 of them.

Filipina Dorothy Delasin fired a 72 for a 228, 17 shots down. *AFP*

SBC golf on tap

A FIELD of more than 100 San Beda lawyers and friends will vie for the three division titles in the joint annual golf tournament of the San Beda Law Golf Club and the San Beda Law Alumni Association on Nov. 20 at the Southwoods Legends Course. Tee-off time is 8:30 a.m.

Registration starts at 7 a.m.

Held in honor of the late Speaker Ramon V. Mitra, an outstanding SBC Law alumnus, the golfest is backed by San Miguel Corp. and Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club.

Also providing support to the annual special event are Transnational Diversified Corp., Phil. Tourism Authority, Globe Telecom, lawyer Sixto Brilliantes III, Parulan Soneuya Sese and Rama Law Offices and Chaves Hechanova & Lim Law Offices.

CHAMPION
World No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt of Australia jubilates after beating Sebastian Grosjean of France, 6-3, 6-3, 6-4, in the final of the Tennis Masters Cup in Sydney, Australia yesterday. The 20-year-old Hewitt dominated the one hour and 55-minute duel despite pre-match fears that a groin injury would restrict his play. He earned US$1.52 million for taking the title and remaining undefeated at Sydney's SuperDome. AP

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Cavite derby slated

NATIONAL and world cockfight champions are set to compete in the upcoming Cavite 7-cock International Derby at Cavite Coliseum on Dec. 3, 5 and 7.

To host the fund-raising sports affair supported by Pagcor-Casino Filipino, Sagupaan Super Feeds and Belamyl by Novartis are Sen. Ramon Revilla and lawyer Rudy Salud. At stake is at least P2 million, while entry fee is P30,000.

Sabong idol Patrick Antonio, former World slasher Cup champion and two-time Cocker of the Year awardee, said he is definitely aiming for the title which had eluded him for the last seven.

For details, contact Ferdie Bautista at 0919-3472192 or (02)-5526724 or Cavite Coliseum at (046)-9709971 and 9704811.

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TENNIS: Masters Cup (Sydney 2001) Highlights at 7 p.m. on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: US NCAA —South Alabama vs Louisville at 1:30 p.m. (r – 6 p.m.) on ESPN

NBA – Toronto Raptors vs Phoenix Suns at 9 a.m. (r – 8 p.m.) on Sky Cable on Home Cable Solar Channel

GOLF: Golfglobe 2001 at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

All set for RP karting tilt

THE PRE-LAUNCHING of the Presidential Karting Cup 2001 will be held at the Holiday Inn Manila starting at 11:30 a.m. on Nov. 24.

This was jointly announced by Gov. Luis Singson (chair of the executive committee), Amb. Roy V. Seneres (chair of the advisory committee) and Greg Gutierez Jr., president of the 7th Philippine International Karting.

GUTIERREZ

Major sponsors of the event are the Dept. of Labor and Employment Commission, National Labor Relations, PCSO, Castrol Philippine, Shell Philippine, Auto Dealer Association of Philippine, Holiday Hotel, Grand Blvd. Hotel, Elite Machineries Testech Inc., Citylight Telecom and Action House Int.

Trophies will be donated by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Organizing the big event are ADAP, PIKP PIKA, the Bikers Association of the Philippines and other Motor Sports Oriented Association in cooperation with the Office of the President, DOT, DOLE, PSC, PMA Philippine National Police, DPWH, MMDA, NBI, DILG, International Aviation Services Canada, Central America Aviation Services, Guatamala. Search Asia Philippine Inc.

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724-5872 · 635-2915 421-2858 or Visit the ADAP Office at G-03 New Manila Condo, Bldg.21 N Domingo Street, Quezon City. Open 8 AM to 8 PM.

Filipino drivers join China racing

ZHUHAI, China—Top Filipino drivers, led by Pepon Marave, performed well in the recent Zhuhai Racing Championships at the Zhuhai International Circuit here.

Shell team's F3 driver Marave was joined in the meet by Formula-Toyota drivers Elson Carpio and the promising Enzo Pastor, who posted the fastest time of 1:42.053 in the qualifying session that put him in the pole position.

Pastor had two second place finishes despite his engine's low compression, while the 19-year-old Pastor has been offered to race next year in the Formula-Renault Championship.

Results: F3—1st race & 2nd race: 1st—Mark Goddard, 2nd Jojo Silverio, 3rd Ricahrd Joson: Ftoyota:— 1st race: 1st JP Tuason, 2nd Enzo Pastor, 3rd, Elsoncarpio

2nd race: 1st Kirk Arambulo, 2nd Enzo Pastor 3rd JP Tuason.

BAP OFFICIALS
Basketball Association of the Philippines vice president for Luzon, Alberto Lina (fourth from left) of Federal Express-Philippines, is shown welcomed by Rep. Antonio M. Abaya (third from right), BAP chair, as members of the BAP Executive Board looks on. Also shown, from left, are Region IV Director Johny Tam; lawyer Bonifacio Alentajan, EVP and legal counsel; Quinteliano Literal, president; Christian Tan, treasurer; and Tony Fabico, auditor.

MARHO BREEDERS' CUP

Myther's filly prevails

By Edwin Villanueva

REYNALDO "Myther" Buñag made the right choice yesterday.

He called in the "Maestro" and the result was a resounding win by Ilocandia Slew in the Three-Year-Old Distaff race of the 6th San Miguel Beer-Marho Breeders' Cup at the jampacked Santa Ana Park.

Buñag picked Jesus Guce to replace an injured J. B. Hernandez atop the favored Ilocandia Slew and the premier jockey didn't disappoint the businessman from Malate.

Ilocandia Slew (Aimaam-Seode) ably responded to Guce's masterful ride to beat John Mendoza's I Love You by half a length in the one-mile race which kicked off the other half of Marho's explosive six-race offering for the Breeders' Cup.

"I know Bong (Guce) can do it with any horse *kaya siya ang napili naming pumalit kay* J.B. First time *lang nyang nasakyan si* Ilocandia Slew *pero parang gamay niya agad*," said Buñag, who along with his "lucky charm," wife Susan, cheered themselves hoarse as their filly dashed to the payoff wire.

Ilocandia Slew's victory, coming right after her Mitra Cup 2 conquest of the Three-Year-Old Fillies, gave Buñag P600,000, while Mendoza settled for P225,000.

"I also commend my trainer Nestor Manalang for superbly conditioning Ilocandia Slew," added Buñag.

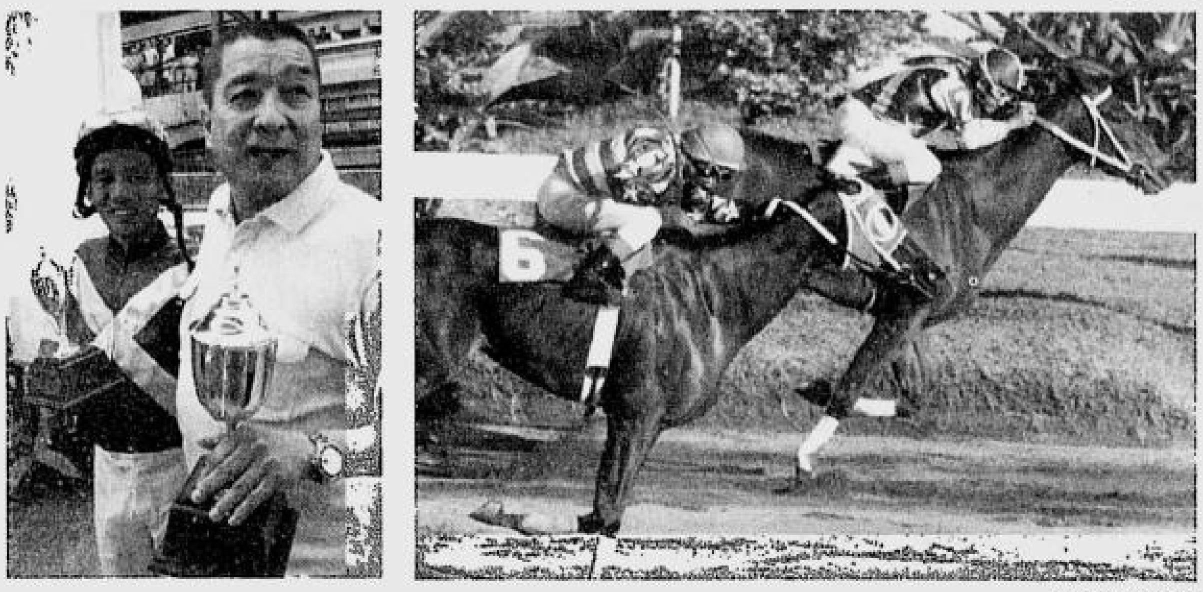
Serena, stablemate of Ilocandia Slew, finished third, another half-a-length behind I Love You, while Fairy Princess was fourth. I Swear and Tumataginting were fifth and sixth, respectively.

Later in the day, Hermie Esguerra's champion colt Wind Blown routed the field in the Classic, while Lyonnais nipped Staunch Ally to prevail in the Three-Year-Old Colt Mile.

Wind Blown, partnered by Pat Dilema, and Lyonnais, steered by Lord Santos, also bagged P600,000 apiece.

Esguerra said Wind Blown's next assigment would be the December Presidential Gold Cup where the massive colt is eyeing a back-to-back triumph.

"Marho would like to thank all the racing fans and our generous sponsors for helping us stage another successful Philippine Breeders' Cup festival," said Marho president Aristeo "Putch" Puyat.



VALHANDUMON

BUÑAG joins Guce at the winner's circle (left photo). At right, Ilocandia Slew edges I Love You, handled by Pat Dilema, to rule the 6th San Miguel Beer-Marho Breeders' Cup Three-Year-Old Distaff Mile race.

Founders' golf lures big field

ALL slots for the 208-team 5th Orchard Founders Invitational Golf Cup—the annual member-guest tournament of The Orchard Golf and Country Club on Nov. 24 and 25—has been filled up, setting the stage for a wild chase for the top plum.

Founders Cup organizers announced yesterday that this week's registrants will be put on waiting list and hope for late withdrawals to be accommodated for the 36-hole tilt at the Orchard's renowned Palmer and Player courses.

The Grand Orchard Raffle is conducted yearly in conjunction with the Founders Cup Tournament with prizes totaling P4 million. The grand prize—A Ford Sport Trac, major prizes include—a Ford Trekker 4x2 and a Ford Lynx Ghia A/T, which will be raffled off during Sunday's awarding ceremonies.

Orchard chair Conrad Benitez said that while winning will be very tough considering the expanded roster, the strict handicap requirements should give all the competing teams a fair chance.

"We asked the organizing committee to carefully review the submitted handicaps and make sure that everything is up to date and club certified," Benitez said.

Already in the sponsorship roster are Cebu Pacific, Greens Management, The Turf Company, Aqua-Dyne, CICI Gen. Insurance,Clark Parnham, C-PAL Metal Works, Emeritus Security, Exotic Gardens & Maintenance, Maisog Engineering, Int'l. Exchange lBank, Sta. Elena Properties, Aeroplus Multi-Services, Equitable-PCI Bank, Golf Library, Sehwani, Bathala Marketing, Knorr & Lipton by Caterplan and G. Raymundo & Associates.

Healthy Nets

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

THINGS are looking up in New Jersey as the Nets lead the Atlantic Division through the early goings of the NBA season.

Since joining the NBA in 1976-77 out of the now-defunct ABA, the Nets have finished no higher than a share of second place (1997-98/43-39 record) in the Atlantic.

The Nets are the league's biggest surprises so far, owning a 7-2 record going into tomorrow's encounter with Denver in the first stop of a five-game road trip that will also take them to Utah (Nov. 22), LA Clippers (Nov. 23), Sacramento (Nov. 23) and Golden State (Nov. 26).

A lot of factors have contributed to the Nets' early success this season. Foremost of which is a favorable schedule. Of the Nets' first nine assignments, six were played at home. They won their first five home contests before dropping a 94-82 decision to Philadelphia yesterday as the 76ers streaked to their fifth win in a row after becoming the first (Eastern) conference champions to drop their first five games the following season.

Unlike a year ago, the Nets now have a healthy team. Keith Van Horn and sophomore pro Kenyon Martin, the starting forwards, are in tip-top shape. Ditto first-string guard Kerry Kittles, who missed the entire 2000-01 were due to knee problems.

Likewise the team that played like a rudderless ship last campaign en route to a humiliating 26-56 finish now has direction under the leadership of Jason Kidd.

Celts lose despite 10 3rd quarter treys

ATLANTA—Shareef Abdur-Rahim scored 29 points and the Atlanta Hawks beat Boston 112-103 Saturday night, despite an NBA-record 10 3-pointers by the Celtics in the third quarter.

The Celtics' first six shots of the third quarter were 3-pointers, and they shot 10-for-16 from beyond the arc in the period. The Mavericks set the previous record of nine 3-pointers in a period at Vancouver on March 1, 1996. Houston matched that mark at Seattle on Dec. 9, 2000.

Complete results:

Atlanta 112, Boston 103; Portland 97, Charlotte 87; Detroit 104, Indiana 98; Memphis 98, Cleveland 93; Minnesota 103, Orlando 95; Philadelphia 94, New Jersey 82; Houston 124, Dallas 87; Milwaukee 104, Utah 93; Golden State 93, Chicago 88; Denver 103, Seattle 93. *AFP*

Zarate, Cuello end up at bottom

GOTEMBA, Japan—The Philippine tandem of Danny Zarate and Rodrigo Cuello got the booby prize in the EMC World Cup of Golf yesterday. But that, obviously, was not the big story.

The World Cup went to South Africa's Ernie Els and Retief Goosen but not after a dramatic turn of events that saw four teams figuring in a sudden-death playoff, including the United states which had been written off until Tiger Woods let out one loud roar on the closing holes.

A two-putt par on the second extra hole was all the South Africans needed to top the playoff on the 18th which was also used as the first playoff hole.

Alabang meet starts Nov. 22

A 36-HOLE tournament spread out in four days will serve as one of the highlights of the Alabang Country Club Inc.'s 20th anniversary celebration slated from Thursday, Nov. 22 to Friday, Nov. 25 at the club's challenging course.

Members and dependents of the exclusive club right at the heart of the millionaire's village will be competing in the event which is actually a two-man team competition, organizers announced recently.

Smart Communications is coming in as presentor of the Alabang festivities which is touted to become the grandest since its opening on Jan. 6, 1981.

Also providing generous support are Insular Life and the Golfers Club Share as major sponsors. Nissan Alabang, Pilipinas Shell, Casino Filipino and the Bank of the Philippine Islands are area sponsors. The hole sponsorships are all filled up.

The Alabang anniversary dinner-dance party at the ACC ballroom on Sunday, Nov. 25 is another major highlight members are looking forward to as five cars—a Nissan Patrol, a Toyota Corolla Altis, a Nissan Exalta 1500 Ds, a Mitsubishi Lancer GLX 1500 and a Honda City—will be raffled off.

Intervillage tilt winds up today

THE ALAXAN 10th grand intervillage golf championship comes to a close today (Monday) with a dozen teams seeing action in the second and final round at Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

The first round was held last Monday with Greenhills 1 carding the day's best score of 326 Stableford points to tow the rest of the field in the race for the overall crown in the event first staged in 1991 to foster camaraderie among golfing village-dwellers.

The Intervillage, sponsored principally by Alaxan and supported by BJ Morthel International, Mastercard, PinoyAuctions.com, ICTSI, STI Computer College, Callaway, Odyssey, Pisanti golf wear, Haagen Dazs and 457 Boracay, started last March with 40 villages, 12 of which qualified to play in the final round.

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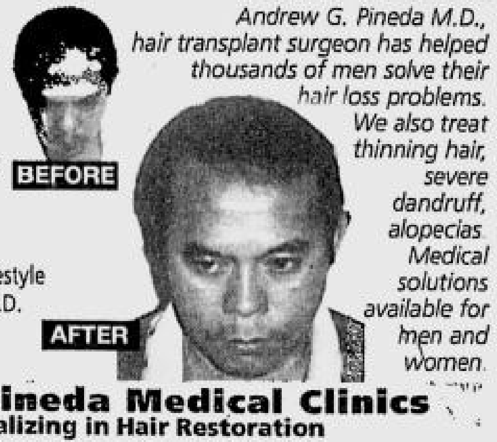

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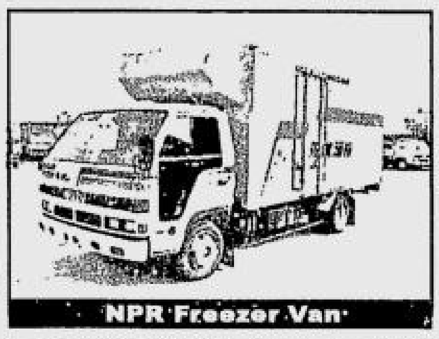
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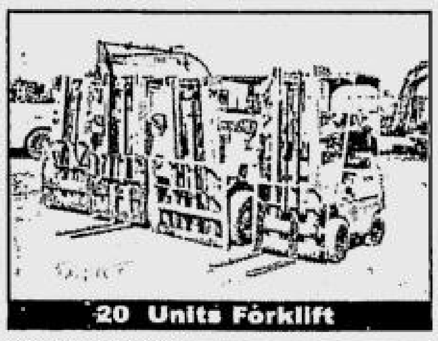
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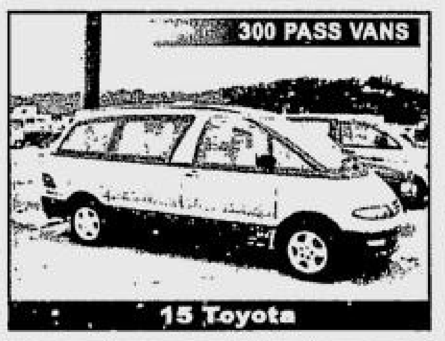

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SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

Bata, Django enter world pool semis

EFREN "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante entered the semifinals of the World Pool League in Poland by hurdling separate rivals. Reyes posted a 7-3 win over last year's champion Steve Knight of Britain, while Bustamante whipped reigning European champion Rico Diks by the same score.

Barreto fails to finish in Grand Prix

MACAU—Angelo Barreto's campaign at the 48th Macau Grand Prix ended in heartbreak yesterday after his brakes failed on the 6th lap and he was unable to finish the Guia Touring Car Comptition. Barreto moved to as high as the 9th position when the breaks of his Toyota Altezza started to fail.

Realtors oust Thunder, reach semis

GAME WEDNESDAY (Philsports)
7 p.m. – Barangay Ginebra vs Shell

BY JUNE NAVARRO

MENDOZA

FRANCIS Adriano was a virtual nobody when he entered the league as a rookie free agent this year. Until last night.

The 6-foot-2 journeyman from the MBA saved Sta. Lucia Realty from the jaws of defeat as the Realtors eliminated Batang Red Bull, 97-93, in the quarterfinals to book a semifinal ticket in the PBA Governors Cup.

Adriano scored five straight points in the last 3 seconds—a triple and a layup—that broke the backs of the Thunder and capped a whirlwind finish for the Realtors, who joined San Miguel Beer in the next round.

Sniper Paolo Mendoza and Damien Owens ignited a fiery windup that overhauled a 10-point deficit and held the Thunder to a single basket in the final three minutes before Adriano took matters for the Realtors.

But for a while, the twice-to-beat Realtors looked quite headed for a do-or-die encounter against the Thunder.

The Thunder led most of the way, posting double-digit margins halfway in the final period through the combined forces of rookie playmaker Willie Miller and Ray Tutt.

Tutt and Miller accounted for 17 of Red Bull's 21 points in the payoff period as the Thunder seized a safe advantage, 91-81, going into the last three minutes.

In the second game, Pop Cola booted out Alaska, 88-78, to arrange a semifinal duel with the Realtors.

STA. LUCIA 97—Owens 32, Mendoza 16, Espino 14, Adriano 11, Aquino 10, Tan 6, Belano 4, Del Rosario 2, Ortiguerra 2.

RED BULL 93—Tutt 37, Miller 21, Harp 9, Valenzuela 9, Pennisi 4, Raymundo 4, Torion 3, Tugade 3, Reyes 3, Mendoza 0, Tanpua 0.

Quarters: 21-23, 44-47, 65-72, 97-93

Andok's rips Nueva Ecija

CABANATUAN CITY—For the Andok's San Juan Knights, playing on the road the whole week posed no problem. Showing they've got enough power left, the Knights beat the Nueva Ecija Patriots, 105-88, yesterday in the penultimate game of the elimination round of the MBA Second Phase at the Araullo Gym.

Andok's San Juan played in Cebu City on Wednesday, in Sta. Cruz, Laguna on Friday before taking on the also-ran host team and winding up with a 9-win, 5-loss slate in the Northern Conference where it has made the semifinals as the No. 3 qualifier.

The Knights would barely have a rest before they travel again on Wednesday to Sta. Cruz to meet the FedEx Laguna Lakers in the opener of their best-of-three series for the right to challenge the LBC Batangas Blades for the conference crown.

While the Patriots could only score two points in the first seven minutes of the third quarter, Randy Alcantara and Chris Calaguio conspired in a 10-point cluster that pushed the Knights comfortably ahead at 60-44.

It was Philip Newton, however, who earned best player honors with his 14-point, 6-rebound, 2-assist effort for Andok's San Juan. Bruce Dacia topscored with 20 points, followed by Calaguio with 18.

Nueva Ecija, which could come in no closer than 66-61 at the end of the third quarter after that Andok's San Juan blitz, wound up its campaign this season with a 3-11 mark. *Roy Luarca*

ANDOK'S SAN JUAN 105—Dacia 20, Calaguio 18, Newton 14, Alcantara 13, Castillo 13, Caobres 8, Victolero 6, Reavis 5, Aying 5, O. Rodriguez 2, Otto 1, Rodriguez 0.

NUEVA ECIJA 88—Bansil 17, De Guia 14, Ferma 12, Bautista 11, Aquino 9, Malonzo 8, Punsalan 5, Manucat 5, A. de Guzman 4, Chaneco 3, Bunyi 0, De Guzman 0. Quarters: 23-18, 50-42, 66-61, 105-88.

National Open caging begins

GAMES TODAY (Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
2 p.m.— Sangmu-Korea vs Spring Cooking Oil
4 p.m.— University of the East vs Cebu-Lhuillier
6 p.m.—FedEx-RP Young Men vs San Sebastian

BOBBY Parks and his multi-titled Spring Cooking Oil gang test the mettle of Sangmu of Korea at 2 p.m. when the 2001 National Open Basketball Championship starts today at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The Oilmakers are managed by multi-titled shooter Tac Padilla and mentored by Tito Palma, while cage legend Shin Dong Pa will call the shots for the Koreans, who placed second in the recent 24th William Jones Cup in Taipei.

Defending champion Cebu-Lhuillier Jewelry takes on University of the East at 4 p.m. while the FedEx-RP Young Men plays National Collegiate Athletic Association Champion San Sebastian College at 6 p.m. in the tournament sanctioned by the Basketball association of the Philippines.

BAP President Quintellano "Tiny" Literal will make the ceremonial toss and will be assisted by PSC Commissioners William Ramirez and Cynthia Carrion

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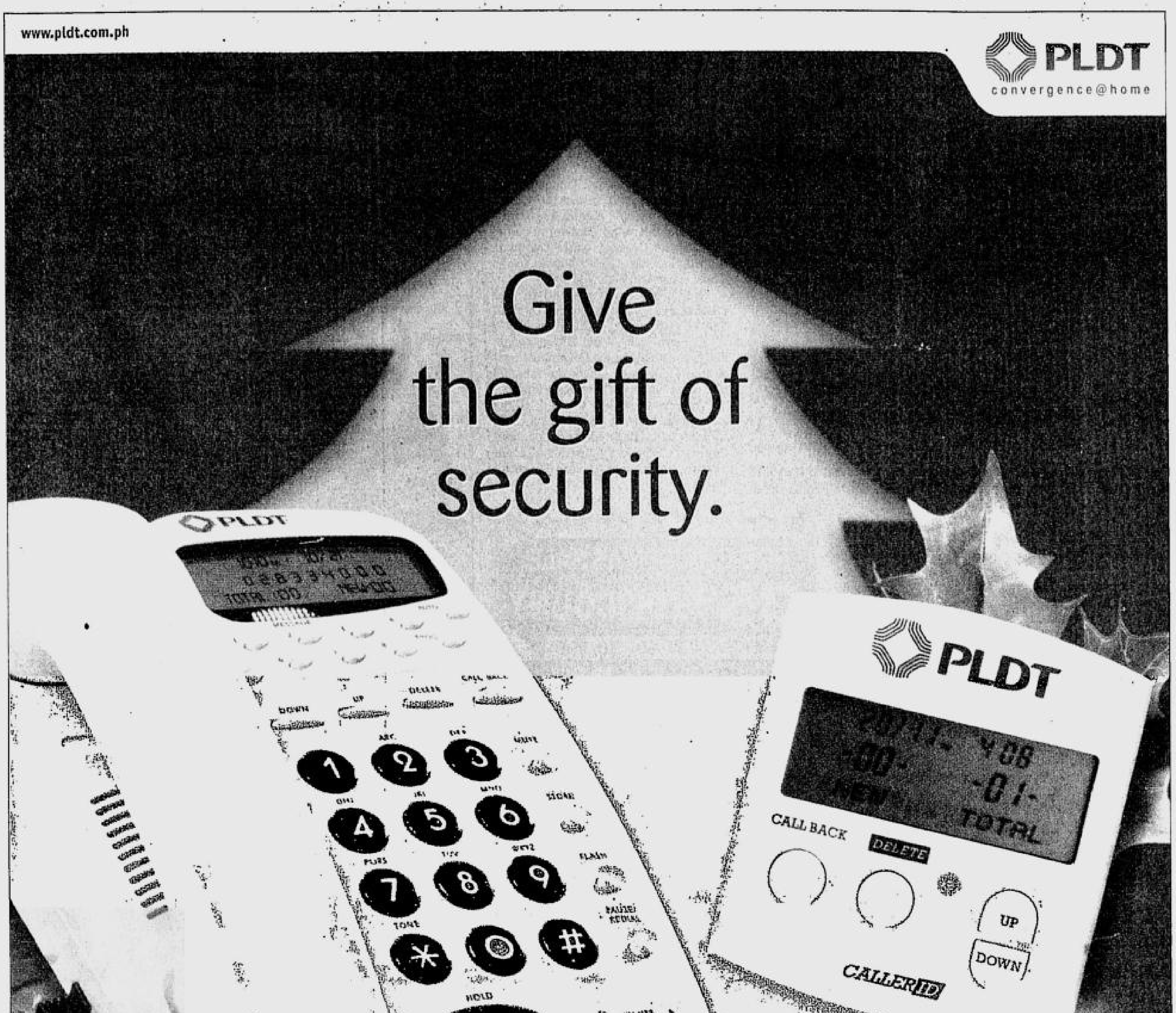

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KIA

Rodriguez mountains searched for killers of former policeman A26
Bare Eye: Suddenly, Lennox Lewis reads like a fiery, suspenseful epic A26

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Reviving Pasig as a gathering place for artists A27
Robbery suspect slain A27

HOLIDAY WATCH

While a girl watches at the Plaza Miranda early Saturday morning, Manila policemen are briefed by their superiors on their deployment during the expected holiday rush.

JIMMY PUNZALAN

Prove it–Abalos

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

ABALOS

GARBAGE czar Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday challenged the environmental group Greenpeace Philippines to prove its allegations that the new garbage technology being pushed by Metro Manila mayors violated many environmental laws abroad.

Abalos, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, said the environmental group should substantiate its charges to help the Department of Environment and Natural Resources evaluate thermoselect, a new technology that uses high temperature to recycle garbage.

"Those were serious allegations, but they were general," Abalos yesterday told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

He said that as far as he is concerned, the Swiss-made technology could be the best solution to the worsening garbage crisis in the metropolis. "It's good and it seems effective," he said.

Thermoselect is being marketed by the US-based Interstate Waste Management Inc.

Roger van den Berghe, Interstate's consultant in the Philippines, yesterday also challenged Greenpeace to come up with tangible proofs that his company has criminal records for violating environmental laws.

"The problem with these people is that they easily come up with sweeping statements without presenting evidence," Van den Berghe said. "The system is practically flawless, but it's still open to their scrutiny."

He said that early this month, he sent

PROVE IT/ A26

Navotas can accommodate oil depot, says solon

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

SANDOVAL

RESIDENTS of Navotas are willing to accept in their town the controversial oil depot in Pandacan, Manila, according to Rep. Ricky Sandoval of Malabon-Navotas.

Sandoval yesterday offered a reclamation site off the coast of Navotas in Manila Bay as the new location of the depot, whose transfer is being urged by the Manila City council for allegedly posing a threat to Manila residents as an environmental hazard, fire trap and terrorist target.

He said local officials and residents of Navotas agreed that the presence of the oil depot in the town would boost its small fishing industry and would generate more employment for the locals.

"Imagine having an oil and fishing industry in the same area," Sandoval said.

"It (oil depot) would certainly generate industries and more employment."

About 5,000 residents stand to get jobs once the oil depot is transferred to Navotas, he added.

The Manila City council had earlier passed a resolution calling for the transfer of the depot in six months.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is eyeing a reclamation site near the mouth of the Pasig River in Manila Bay as the new location for the oil depot. But DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez said on Friday that it still has to be determined if the new site would fall under the jurisdiction of Pasay, Manila, or Navotas.

Alvarez said another option was a 50-hectare island off the coast of Pampanga.

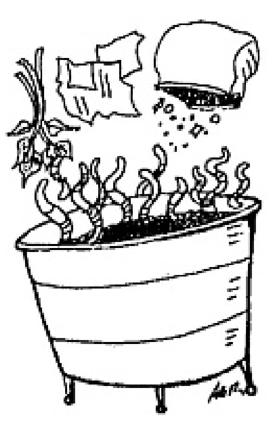
But Sandoval said transferring the oil depot outside of Metro Manila would result in increased freight cost.

"Navotas is a logical choice because it's near" to oil facilities in the metropolis, Sandoval stressed.

Since the oil depot could be built in a reclamation site one kilometer off the coast of Navotas, it would not pose danger to the residents, according to Sandoval.

The United Firefighters Association of the Philippines had warned that a fire at the Pandacan oil depot or a terrorist attack on the oil facility would result in a catastrophe. Manila's firefighters are ill-equipped to deal with a fire at the oil depot and thousands of people living in its vicinity could die within seconds of a blaze or a terrorist attack.

Worms good recyclers, says Aussie envoy



LEFTOVER food scraps, paper products, and other organic wastes need not be additional worries to households. These can best be placed in a worm farm, one of the best alternatives to getting rid of our daily garbage.

Australian Ambassador John Buckley, who recently presented a worm farm to Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez in Makati City, explained that worm farms help recycle organic garbage, turning it into a product that would restore and revive the land and in turn fertilize gardens and trees.

Buckley, who maintains a worm farm in his Makati City garden, says worms can eat all types of food scraps with the exception of meat and dairy products which attract flies.

Worms can consume paper, cardboard and even materials from vacuum cleaner bags, converting them into rich compost or castings, he said. These castings can in turn be used as fertilizers for all types of plants as they are rich in nitrogen, phosphorous, calcium and potassium with a neutral pH level, he said.

The worms presented by Ambassador Buckley were locally-bred African night crawler earthworms from Barangay Sun Valley in Parañaque, which can eat up to half their own weight in organic waste each day.

WORMS GOOD/ A26

WAZZZZUP ?
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

8th day BAR + CAFE ST. FRANCIS SQ. ORTIGAS CTR	MULATTO (MONDAY NOV. 19)	LIVE WIRE ☎ 634.7696/98
BUMA 9591 KAMAGONG ST. MAKATI	MAHA BAND	AEGIS P 900 W/ DINNER NOV 29 MON-SAT/896.1939
Cowboy Grill BRGY. ALMANZA, LAS PIÑAS	HOMOSAPIENS STREETLIFE	GRIN DEPT NOV. 28 ☎8017644
Cowboy Grill 1190 ARQUIZA ST. MALATE	MUSIC CIRCUIT FAT 16/BROWNIE	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill 411 REMEDIOS ST. MALATE	MR. ROXY PARTY-Z-POLE	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎5218143
Cowboy Grill NOVALICHES Q.C.	GIFTED MIND KNIGHTS/ GOALKEYS	MAEGAN AGUILAR NOV 23 ☎936.9757
DOWNTOWN Music Bar & Restaurant HOTEL REMBRANDT, T. MORATO, Q.C.	MILLENIUM BAND RETRO NIGHT	☎373.3333
Friends @ the square ST. FRANCIS SQ. ORTIGAS CENTER	PAULO SANTOS	☎635.0279
MUSIC WAREHOUSE	FIGURE 8 PART E	AIZA SEGUERRA NOV 23 735.1280/735.1405
TIA MARIA'S JUPITER ST. MAKATI CITY	SPHAGETTI VERSE-2	TIAS REMEDIOS GROOVE NOV 28 ☎890.4735
OUTSIDE METRO MANILA		
Cowboy Grill BIÑAN, LAGUNA	OFF BEAT HIMIG	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ (049) 511.7268
Partyplace SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA	YINYANG	[illegible] ☎(045)961.3360

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Suddenly, Lennox Lewis reads like a fiery, suspenseful epic

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LENNOX Lewis was a boring story that kept being retold.

The experts were right: The intermittent periods Lewis had previously reigned as King of Heavyweight Hill were among the dullest in the history of the rich premier division.

Yes, there had been sporadic dazzle and excitement in the two times Lewis had ruled as heavyweight king. But these were fueled and provided mainly by his opponents.

For example, if not for his two meetings with Evander Holyfield, very little or nothing at all would have been remembered of the so-called Lennox Lewis era.

Who could deny that it was Holyfield's colorful style and daring, not Lewis' retreating, over-cautious stance, that had caused those bouts to be talked about?

***

It simply pointed to one discrepancy. The Lewis reign had always been wanting in a singular defining moment.

.But listen here. Yesterday Lewis suddenly sprang from a dark corner, flailing and hollering, with a new, exciting, suspenseful story to tell.

We all have to pause and listen because this time, the Lewis tale has the makings of a real blockbuster.

Lewis was no longer talking of himself. He no longer spoke of how he dreamt of being ranked among the all-time greatest.

Of course, he did not appear brand new. But he was leaner, and snared with convincing menace and meanness.

***

OK. Lewis stopped Hashim Rahman, as he had vowed, to become a world heavyweight champion for the third time, a feat previously achieved by Muhammad Ali with his rematch victory over Leon Spinks in 1978.

But the fire and excitement in the new Lewis story had nothing to do with his routine dumping of Rahman, who had obviously spent more time blabbering, peddling doubts about his opponent's gender, than training sufficiently for the big rematch.

Rahman, famous for 15 minutes, will henceforth be a footnote in heavyweight history.

The poor guy simply lost the original fire and hunger that he had flashed heroically in that first meeting with Lewis.

***

Anyway, after dumping Rahman cold with a stunning left-right combination to the head midway in the fourth round, Lewis has followed up with a blazing dare.

This time, he focused on Iron Mike Tyson.

Hollered the Man of the Hour: "They said he (Tyson) would be ready only after two more fights. I want Tyson now, put him on!"

There was no shadow of Iron Mike around, so Lewis dared his critics to bring in whomever they think could provide a worthy challenge.

Well, truth is there seems no other big fighter perfectly fit to back the Lewis sales pitch. Except Mike Tyson himself.

A Lewis-Tyson yours-or-mine clash could indeed break all-time records in purses and attendance.

***

You might have also forgotten this. We do love reversals, but didn't the boxing world also sneer after Lewis was upset by Rahman?

Not because we had suddenly learned to care for a very dull champ.

We did click our tongues, shook our heads after that Rahman stunner because it instantly killed a budding epic: the Lewis-Tyson blockbuster.

Then, yesterday, the old golden plot, previously in disarray, suddenly re-arranged itself.

Everybody, from Don King to Tony Blair, talked about a Lennox Lewis-Mike Tyson all-time classic meeting.

Heavyweight Hill is again ablaze with excitement.

***

Yes, the Lennox Lewis story had **been left to gather dust in a corner of the heavyweight library. But yesterday, it again started to crackle and sizzle.**

Credit this time should go to the newly recrowned heavyweight boxing king of the world himself.

The new Lennox Lewis did make things happen, all by himself.

Still, how can we deny that most of the new excitement is being fueled by the reputation and undiminished burning-iron worth of Mike Tyson?

The new Lewis Story, colorful and suspenseful as it promises to be, is slowly and surely being built around the other fellow.

***

Of course, as suggested by boxing expert Hermie Rivera, another sure blockbuster could be staged if they decide to complete the Lewis-Holyfield trilogy.

"These two guys, as the whole boxing world knows, also have an unfinished business," Hermie explained. "They scored it a draw in the first Holyfield-Lewis meeting which critics thought had been won by Lewis; then they made Lewis the winner in the second meeting which, by a plain look, should have been won by Holyfield."

That indeed sounds like a very saleable proposal, but doesn't Holyfield himself has another unfinished business with John Ruiz?

So the question to ask is: After a certain Hasim Rahman had rudely interrupted it, would the great producers on Heavyweight Hill agree to have what looks like a perfect script for a Lennox Lewis story be revised?

Why gamble with an untried plot when they have Iron Mike Tyson as the main ingredient of a prizefight epic?

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, November 19, 2001
33rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **1 Mac 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-64**
Gospel: **Lk 18:35-43**

When Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road, begging. As he heard the crowd passing by, he inquired what it was, and they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was going by. Then he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" The people in front scolded him, "Be quiet!" but he cried out all the more, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and ordered the blind man to be brought to him, and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the man said, "Lord, that I may see!" Jesus said, "Receive your sight, your faith has saved you." At once the blind man was able to see, and he followed Jesus, giving praise to God. And all the people who were there also praised God.

Commentary

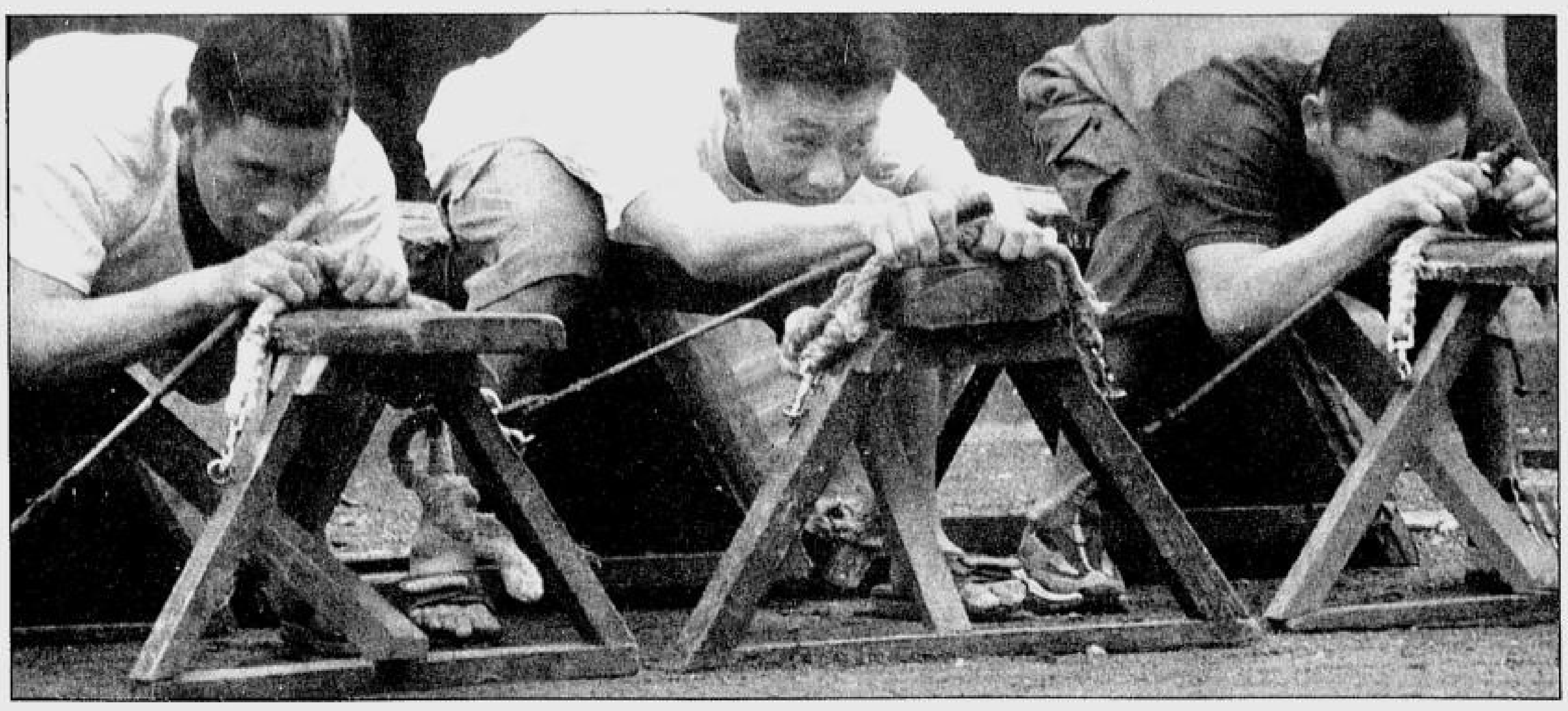
Jesus passes by with a crowd. A blind man cries out for mercy. But some people scold him and keep him down. Is it improper for him to cry for help? Some people do not seem to be sensitive to the needs of others. They insist on formal etiquette, on protocol. The blind is considered an outcast of society. To Jesus, nobody in need is an outcast. He never passes over a plea for help from anyone in need. So Jesus stops. And the blind man sees and follows Jesus. This is the true response of faith. The healing miracle is meant in the gospel to lead to follow Jesus. In the Bible, seeing is an expression for a deep experience of God.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION—Doctrine of stare decisis—The doctrine of stare decisis ordained in Article 8 of the Civil Code expresses that judicial decisions applying or interpreting the law shall form part of the legal system of the Philippines. The rule follows the settled legal maxim—*legis interpretado legis vim obtinet*—that the interpretation placed upon the written law by a competent court has the force of law. The interpretation or construction placed by the courts establishes the contemporaneous legislative intent of the law. The latter as so interpreted and construed would thus constitute a part of that law as of the date the statute is enacted. It is only when a prior ruling of this Court finds itself later overruled, and a different view is adopted, that the new doctrine may have to be applied prospectively in favor of parties who have relied on the old doctrine and have acted in good faith in accordance therewith under the familiar rule of *"lex prospicit, non respicit."* [Citations omitted] [Justice Vitug, Third Division, Pesca v. Pesca, G.R. No. 136921, April 17, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA



GAMES BIG BOYS PLAY

JIMMY PUNZALA

These men are not playing. They are studying how to ride race horses, using wooden benches, at the Philippine Jockey Academy in Sta. Ana, Manila

Rodriguez mountains searched for killers of former policeman

BY NELSON F. FLORES

RIZAL Provincial Police Office authorities are still searching for four suspected communist hit men who shot and killed in an ambush a former policeman in Rodriguez town (formerly Montalban) last Wednesday.

Supt. Arturo Tolentino, RPPO director, said the provincial police mobile group is still pursuing the gunmen who are believed to be members of the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command of the New People's Army.

He added, however, that despite the pursuit operations, normal police services are available to the public.

Tolentino said the mobile group is scouring the Montalban mountain ranges, which stretch from Rodriguez town and San Mateo to Antipolo City.

He said there would be no letup in the police operation until the gunmen who killed Leonardo Santos, 51, a former patrolman of the defunct Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police and a resident of Barangay San Rafael, Rodriguez, Rizal, are captured.

He said the red alert status of the Rizal-PNP is still in place.

Santos was ambushed near his home last Wednesday morning. He suffered gunshot wounds in the head and was pronounced dead on arrival in a nearby hospital.

His killers, whom witnesses said were "young looking," escaped after the ambush and were last seen heading toward Barangay Wawa, where they were reportedly met by 20 other armed guerillas, police said.

The gunmen left a note claiming that Santos was sentenced to death for his crimes against the people like the grabbing of the ancestral lands of minority groups and participation in numerous "salvage" operations against leaders of cause-oriented groups.

Lagutan said the gunmen also noted the active support of the victim for the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry Division based in Tanay. Rizal and their counter-insurgency operations.

Intelligence sources at the RPPO said the gunmen were seen in Barangay San Rafael in Antipolo City. The sources said the sightings confirmed earlier reports that the killing is part of a communist offensive to avenge the death of four communist rebels in the same barangay.

1 killed in videoke bar clash

A MAN was killed and another was injured when two groups of drinkers clashed inside a Navotas videoke bar early yesterday morning.

Alejandro Monzales, 54, died from a stab wound in the chest while Jesus Romanca, 24, was injured after he was stabbed in the right side of the body, said case investigator PO3 Charlie Bontigao.

The groups of Monzales and Romanca were having separate drinking sessions inside a videoke and billiards joint. When a nephew of Monzales, identified only as "Mulok," was singing, one of Romanca's companions ridiculed him, police said.

Mulok confronted Romanca's group, triggering a free-for-all between the two groups, police said.

Monzales tried to break the rumble, but one of Romanca's companions allegedly stabbed him with an ice pick. He died before he could arrive at the Tondo Medical Center.

Christian V. Esguerra

Fisherman electrocuted

A DRIVER was electrocuted while fishing in the Makati City portion of the Pasig River last Friday.

Police identified the fatality as Benedicto Tupaz, 39, of Barangay Tejeros, Makati City.

According to SPO1 Lewelie Cristobal of the Makati City police Homicide Section, the accident occurred around 5 p.m. at the bank of the Pasig River near the Rockwell Mall along J.P. Rizal in Barangay Guadalupe Viejo.

Witnesses told police Tupaz, who had a small store in the area, decided to go fishing using rods which he attached to a nearby electrical post.

Funeral parlor 'agents' warned

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

MANILA policemen caught acting as agents of funeral parlors would be relieved from their post, according to Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos, director of the Western Police District (WPD).

Pasinos issued the warning to all commanders of WPD's 11 stations and unit chiefs and ordered an investigation after Manila 5th district councilor Juan Miguel Cuna said that many of his constituents complained about the unlawful practice.

"This issue put the police in a bad light," Pasinos said. "It is an unimaginable thing that must come to an end to erase from the minds of the citizenry this picture of vultures depicted in news items."

Cuna pointed out that the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act prohibits public officers from "giving unwarranted benefits, advantage or preference to private parties in the discharge of their duties."

Some WPD policemen allegedly act as agents of funeral parlors and get commissions for referring to their "favorite" funeral parlors for autopsies the bodies of victims in their jurisdiction.

An autopsy is mandatory for victims of homicides or murders and accidents.

But the funeral parlors overcharge the families of the victims' to recoup the commissions to pay the policemen, according to the complaints.

"Bringing bodies to selected funeral parlors for autopsy and receiving commissions for doing so is definitely illegal," Cuna said.

Cuna also advised complainants to file a formal complaint against the erring policemen before the People's Law Enforcement Board (Pleb) to deter other lawmen from acting as funeral parlor agents.

Pasinos said that should his office continue to receive complaints about this malpractice, he would relieve the erring policeman's superior for not doing enough to stop the practice.

Prove...

(From page A25)

Greenpeace a set of documents about thermoselect so that the environmental group could evaluate the new technology. But he said Greenpeace did not respond. "Now here they are making a lot of criticisms."

The system "perfectly" complies with the Clean Air Act and the Ecological Waste Management Act since it does not incinerate garbage and has no emissions, according to Van den Berghe.

It also promotes the present segregation and composting scheme being implemented in the metropolis.

Metro Manila mayors, led by Joey Marquez of Para□aque, are supporting thermoselect, saying it could be a permanent solution to the garbage problem.

The technology heats up, but not necessarily burns, garbage to convert it into drinking water, clean air, construction materials, and other useable minerals, according to Van den Berghe.

SILVER JUBILEE

In celebration of its silver jubilee, St. Joseph's College Batch '76 announces its last fundraising event for the year, a raffle before its grand alumni homecoming, to be held on Dec. 8, 2001, 4:30 p.m., at the Social Hall of the SJC High School Department. The Search for Outstanding Alumnae also continues. Any St. Joseph's College High School graduate who has excelled in her field is eligible for nomination. For details, please call Bebot Aquino-Araneta at 922-3075; Marika Amigo-Bulahan, 911-7873; Dot Ramos Balasbas-Gancayco, 0917-6068298; Jo Dumlao-Gomez, 0917-8140918; or Carmen at St. Joseph's College High School Department, 723-0221.

Worms good recyclers, says Aussie...

(From page A25)

The worm bins come from a multi-award-winning Australian company, Rein Plastics Pty Ltd., which manufactures Can of Worms and Wriggly Wranch. These worm farms were first made available in Australia in 1993. The products have been used by over 100,000 home worm farmers or vermicomposters worldwide.

Reln's Can-O-Worms is a multi-level cylinder that harnesses the composting power of earthworms, nature's foremost recyclers, in the disposal of organic waste. These stacking vermicomposting systems offer people a smart and simple way to retrieve the finished vermicompost, according to the ambassador.

The fully assembled Can-O-Worms unit is made from recycled plastic. It consists of a collector tray with legs and tap, three working trays and lid.

The first working tray has 1,000 to 2,000 composting worms, and organic waste is added incrementally. The worms eat the waste, turning it into castings. As each tray is filled with organic waste, the next working tray is added, the worms moving through the sieve-like base of the trays to the new food above.

By the time the last tray has been added, the first tray will be full of nutrient-rich odorless worm castings that can be removed and used in gardens.

The Can-O-Worms requires no shoveling, sorting or tedious separation of worms, unlike other composting systems, the Australian embassy said. The circular working trays maintain the critical surface area required for effective vermiculture. The legs bring the working trays to an accessible height for lifting when ready to harvest.

Relatively small and unobtrusive, the closed, odorless, hygienic Can-O-Worms system can be placed on verandahs or in gardens, making composting available to almost any household.

Even the Can-O-Worms packaging can be recycled and used as worm food. A fully operational Can-O-Worms can house up to 20,000 composting worms, capable of eating up to 5 kilograms of organic waste daily producing useful nutrient rich natural fertilizer.

Worm farming is popular in Australia as it is the best way to compost domestic garbage, according to an embassy statement.

Worms like to live in dark, moist environments, living well bedded in shredded newspaper, straw, leaves, compost or coir.

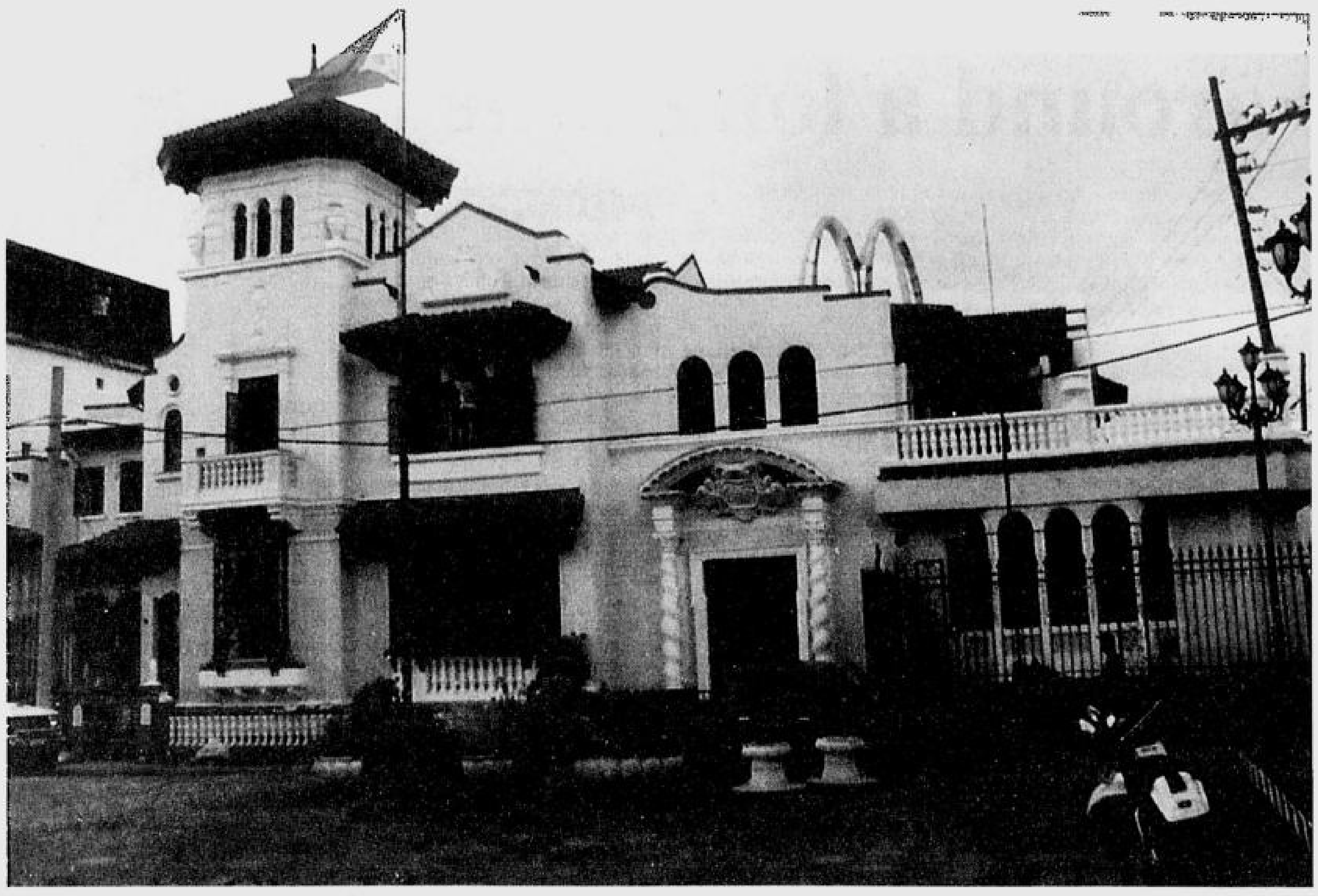
Starting a worm farm is very simple, the ambassador said. No special training is required and costs are minimal - all you need to get started is a worm bin, bedding, worms and your organic waste.

But the resulting vermicompost or worm castings are more valuable to farmers, landscapers and home gardeners than raw manure, the embassy said.

Vermicompost from worm farms provide stable organic material which conserves moisture, improves soil conditions in various ways and enhances the growth and yields of most plants.

Reviving Pasig as a gathering place for artists

By Agnes E. Donato



PASIG MUSEUM

ONCE the inspiration of Filipino masters that included some of the biggest names in Philippine art, the Pasig River is out to claim its former glory as a "vast creative reservoir" for artists of this generation.

And even if none of the artists featured in "Tagpuan, Pagyabong ng Sining sa Pasig," a visual art exhibition marking the 428th Pasig Day and the renaissance of the Pasig Museum, the river once again became the backdrop of a cultural event.

Hopefully, the exhibition would recreate the reputation of the Pasig River as one of the centers of art in the Philippines.

"Then, the Pasig River served as an inspiration not only for local artists," related George Dadivas, executive director of the Pasig City Museum. "Even those from other towns came here to portray the scenery.

"It is really sad that artists now seem to have lost interest in the Pasig River (as a subject)," he noted. "Nobody wants to portray the Pasig River anymore, unless you are a surrealist."

That is not hard to understand, said Dadivas, after the neglect of the river during the last decades.

Inspiration

But Dadivas could still draw inspiration from the glorious past of the river.

Many well-known artists used to meet where the river runs though for informal art sessions, Dadivas said.

"Something about Pasig seemed to draw the artists to come here and engage in endless discussions with other artists," he said. "Manansala, for one, used to meet with his contemporaries here and exchange sketches with them while Botong (Francisco) and (Fernando) Amorsolo would come to do portraits and landscapes."

But the Pasig's reputation as a haven or sanctuary for artists faded with the times or ended with the deaths of the old groups of artists who gathered by the river.

The younger artists did not take up the rituals of the masters, and started to work on their own.

Many from this new breed would become well-established artists themselves, earning not only local reputations but also global recognition. And unlike the original group of masters, they also did not get a chance to show their work collectively.

Meeting again

Only after three decades did three generations of Pasig artists meet again through the "Tagpuan" exhibition, which showcased the works of more than 35 artists. It is also the first show of the newly inaugurated Pasig City Museum, which was known in the 1920s as the "bahay na tisa" and served as a watering hole for Amorsolo, Lope K. Santos and comics illustrator Gregorio Coching.

Among the first generation artists represented in the exhibit were visual artist Cenon Rivera, sculptor Ambrosio Morales and philatelist Nemesio Dumanlig, now all deceased.

Nominated posthumously for National Artist in 2000, Rivera was the father of Noel who founded in 1979 the Royal Stained Glass Industries to execute the elder Rivera's stained glass designs.

Noel's own works were also featured in the exhibition along with the works of his son Angelo, an art photographer.

Noted for his painting "Our Lady of Sampaguita," Dumanlig is a known for his stamp designs highlighting Philippine socio-political issues, figures and institution. Our Lady of Sampaguita is said to be the "only existing presentation of the evacuation of Pasig people to the mountains of Antipolo in 1899 during the Philippine American war, as told to him by veterans and old townspeople."

Morales founded the Pasig Art Club in 1950s, when he was still the dean of the UP College of Fine Arts. One of his members, Jose "Pyt" Santos, is the only surviving member of the club and is now associated with the prestigious Saturday Group.

Newmillennium

There were also those who hit it big in foreign countries, like the New York-trained Manolo Lozada, who was a recipient of the First Brooklyn Museum Research Fellowship Award, which was especially created to suit his accomplishment.

Evident in the works of the younger artists which included illustrators, animators, production designers and web designers, are the art styles of the new millennium where electronic commerce and digital technology are the prevailing norm.

"With Tagpuan, we hope to recreate the cultural glory of Pasig during the pre-war years, to reclaim Pasig's position in national discourse or history and to reestablish Pasig in the cultural map," Dadivas said.

But there is a practical side to the exhibit.

"We also aim to discover new talents which could be tapped for the emerging art-related industry in Pasig," he said. "Who knows, this might just start new global opportunities to increase employment for the Pasiguenos?

"But most of all, we hope that this will open new doors for the younger artists of Pasig who are very talented but have never been given the opportunity and venue to show their unique gifts."

Internet lab set up in QC public school

TO BOOST the information technology skills of Filipinos, Ayala Foundation Inc. recently mobilized resources to provide an Internet laboratory worth P800,000 for the Ramon Magsaysay High School in Cubao, Quezon City.

The laboratory is the 20th facility established by Ayala Foundation's Youth Tech project. Youth Tech aims to mobilize total resources valued at P24 million by yearend to bring connectivity to public high schools.

The Youth Tech facility at Ramon Magsaysay High School is a collaboration among corporate partners Ayala Foundation, Bayantel and Sky Internet, the Department of Education, and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who donated computers and Internet peripherals.

The laboratory will expose and train public high school students and teachers in the use of computers and the Internet.

"There is a need to help develop the competitive edge of today's youth to meet the challenges of the New Economy," explains Jaime Angusto Zobel de Ayala, president and chief executive officer of Ayala Corp. "We are committed to provide the tools, skills, and opportunities which will allow them to thrive in the information revolution."

Launched last year, Youth Tech has benefited thousands of students and teachers in select public high schools with computer laboratories that have free Internet access and e-mail connection.

The project has already mobilized a total of P16 million for 20 Internet laboratories and plans to raise another P8 million to build more in at least 10 high schools by the end of 2001.

To help them achieve this goal, Youth Tech is now part of CONNECTed.ph, a private sector consortium that seeks to make information and communications technology (ICT) accessible to Filipinos in all sectors nationwide.

Teachers and principals of partner schools have observed that the Youth Tech facility has increased the students' level of awareness of computers and the Internet as tools for research and communication.

No longer isolated from the information superhighway, Filipino students have started participating in online lessons and interactive discussions as well as downloading educational information.

The project has also inspired them to pursue careers in information technology.

Youth Tech
MOA SIGNING

AYALA Corp. president and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala (left) and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay affix their electronic signatures to a memorandum of agreement establishing the Internet laboratory at the Ramon Magsaysay High School.

Apart from providing ICT facilities, Youth Tech also provides education. Youth Tech has facilitated the hands-on training of public high school teachers in computer network administration, Internet surfing, and telecollaboration or the use of the Internet for teaching and research.

Zobel says the program will be repeated in public high schools all over the country so that more Filipinos will be able to enjoy the benefits of information technology.

"We hope that Youth Tech will help young Filipinos to be better equipped for the future," notes Zobel.

Robbery suspect shot dead in Malabon

SUSPECTED robber Jordan Nocum was killed in a shootout with Malabon policemen, after he and his companions Joel Quilan, 26, and Alexander Yumul, 26, allegedly robbed a passenger jeepney about 8:30 a.m. yesterday in Malabon, police said.

Nocum died from a gunshot wound in the head and the right ear, while Quinlan and Yumul were arrested, police said.

PO3 Jorge dela Cruz and PO3 Redentor Mantala said the suspects posed as passengers inside the jeepney (PKV-926) driven by Luis Araneta, 26, and announced the holdup while they were along McArthur Highway on the way to Monumento in Caloocan City.

Police said the suspects took the cash and valuables of the jeepney's seven passengers and escaped by forcing a tricycle driver to take them to Barangay Letre in Malabon.

But the front tire of the tricycle blew up, forcing the suspects to flee on foot. Responding to the complaint of the jeepney passengers, members of the Police Community Precinct 2 led by SPO1 Roberto Ladramo went after the suspects, who refused to surrender and traded shots with the cops.

Christian V. Esguerra

Man commits suicide on eve of kid's birthday

A JOBLESS man committed suicide after a fight with his wife over who was going to pay for their two-year-old son's birthday party today, police said.

The body of Leonard Marbella, 23, of Tondo Manila, was found inside his room about 8 a.m. yesterday by his 17-year-old common law wife. They have two children.

Investigator Steve Casimiro of the Western Police District homicide section said Marbella and his wife often fought. On Saturday night, the couple fought about their son's birthday and slept in different bedrooms, police said.

The following morning, Marbella's wife used her key to open the room where Marbella had slept and found him already dead, police said.

An autopsy would be done on Marbella's body to confirm if he really killed himself, Casimiro said.

Philip C. Tubeza

Holiday upsurge in domestic tourism expected

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's expected declaration of another long holiday this Christmas would result in an upsurge in domestic tourism that would more than cover the slump in foreign visitors.

This was the view of Tourism Secretary Richard J. Gordon after the President reiterated last week her plan to give government workers an extended break between Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, 2002 to allow them to be with their families and visit relatives in the provinces.

The President said the extended Christmas holiday is only optional for the private sector.

Gordon also noted that a big number of overseas Filipino workers and *balikbayan* would be returning home for the Christmas holidays.

He pointed out that OFWs and *balikbayans* bring home their dollars earnings and in doing so reinvigorate the local economy.

In a recent interview with the Atlanta-based cable News Network (CNN), Gordon said, "Filipinos have a unique way of celebrating what is considered the world's longest Christmas season. Various activities during the Christmas season include the midnight Masses, display of colorful lanterns and the traditional gift giving."

After Christmas, he said, the renowned Sto. Niño fiesta celebrations in Cebu, Bacolod and Iloilo would continue to attract foreign and local tourists.

Gordon admitted there had been a slight drop in foreign tourist arrivals following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

But he brushed aside insinuations that tourists were skipping the Philippines because of perceived security threats in the South due to the activities of the bandit group Abu Sayyaf.

"Aside from our military and police forces, the United States government is stepping into the picture to put an end to the Abu Sayyaf group," Gordon said. "Moreover, the President is currently in the United States to seek more help in addressing safety concerns, such as kidnapping, in the country."

The tourism chief is currently on a European marketing tour to promote Philippine tourism and to push the Department of Tourism's Volunteer 12 program among Filipino communities.

Metro Manila, provinces in anti-TB campaign

UP TO 80 percent of cases of tuberculosis occur among Filipinos aged between 15 and 54, the most economically productive age group in society.

Also known as the "poor man's disease," TB occurs mainly among the low-income sector of society. If a patient is not diagnosed and given treatment, he stands to lose an average of a full year's work.

To help stop the disease from further disabling Filipinos, GlaxoSmithKline Foundation and the Philippine Tuberculosis Society Inc. (PTSI) have launched the "DOTS: Laban sa TB" project.

This anti-TB initiative follows the World Health Organization (WHO)-recommended Directly Observed Treatment Short Course or DOTS strategy.

It's a nationwide program that focuses on the working age group within the 20 operational areas of PTSI, which have high incidences of TB.

The program covers Zamboanga, Zamboanga del Sur, Kabankalan, Cebu, Bohol, Guimaras, Negros, Iloilo, Cadiz, Leyte, Roxas, Albay, Cavite, Pangasinan, Cagayan and five areas in the National Capital Region, including Pasay, the Central Research and Training Center, the Domicialiary Service Unit, District V TB Center and Valenzuela CCD.

Under the program, the GlaxoSmithKline Foundation will provide free anti-TB treatment to patients who are of working age but who have become unproductive because of the disease.

PTSI will implement the program. It would provide infrastructure and personnel for anti-TB services, including screening, diagnosis and monitoring. Treatment is also part of the services.

Launched last July, "DOTS: Laban sa TB" will run for at least three years.

Every year, GlaxoSmithKline Foundation will donate medicines worth about P7.4 million for the treatment of some 1,300 TB patients.

Under DOTS, a treatment partner observes a TB patient take his medicines daily throughout the six months of therapy.

The treatment partner also educates and motivates the TB patient to comply with the treatment up to the final day. This will show that the disease can be cured, its transmission prevented and will increase stop the increasing trend of multi-drug resistance.

Pilgrim heart of Blessed Hannibal arrives in Manila

THE PILGRIM heart of Blessed Hannibal Mary di Francia, founder of the Rogationists and Daughters of Divine Zeal, will arrive in Manila at 6:30 p.m. today on board Flight CX903.

A welcome ceremony will be held at Gate 16 of the Ninoy Aquino international Airport.

The blessed heart of Blessed Hannibal will visit different churches, orphanages, formation centers and convents throughout the country and will proceed to India on Jan. 2, 2002.

Fr. Hannibal died in Messina on June 1, 1927 and was beatified by Pope John Paul II on Oct. 7, 1990. He is considered the patron of vocations and father of the orphans and the poor.

Annibale Maria di Francia, or Hannibal, was born on July 5, 1851.

When the young Hannibal was a deacon, he discovered the slums of Messina in Italy where he helped the poorest of the poor. As a priest, he abandoned his noble lineage and gave all his inheritance for the upliftment of the poor.

He founded two congregations to carry out his mission—the Daughters of Divine Zeal and the Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus.

Almost 75 years after his death, his body remains intact and rests in the Evangelical Rogation Temple in Messina.

Religious testimonies reveal that Blessed Hannibal's relics perform miracles.

'ALL I EVER WANT'

Not Sharon's greatest, but it will stay around a long time

BY EMMAN V. PAPA

REVIEW

FINALLY, with her latest album in my hands, I can now proudly say that I have more than a puny idea of how it is to be enthralled at least once in my life by the megastar, Sharon Cuneta.

Her new CD starts with "Where's the Good in Goodbye" by Jim Brickman. The romantic, sentimental song has the makings of a radio-friendly hit that can be played 24/7.

The title of the second track, "Are You That Someone," succinctly conveys the message of the entire song and is easy to sing along with ("Are you that someone/ that special someone/ sent down to love me/ out of all the somebodys . . . Say that it's true/my someone is you"). But this track reminds me a little of the Colour Me Bad hit "The Earth, the Sun, the Rain."

"My Heart Beats for You Baby" starts as a soothing love hymn then intensifies a notch but still retains its emotive romantic theme ("Oh angel eyes it's no surprise/ you constantly take hold of me/ I can't complain you stay the same/ like autumn rain you ease my pain"). The strong vocal work toward the end is hard-hitting, a virtual assault on the heart.

But "In Your Eyes," a duet with Andy Lau, and composed by Brickman again, unfortunately rates poorly because of its commonplace lyrics ("Oh my love/ now I don't know what to say/ you take my breath away, and I'm yours"). Still, there's a bright side to the song as the voices of Sharon and Andy blend well effortlessly.

"If Ever" evokes a peaceful, majestic garden where you can lay back and relax for as long as you care to. With its laid-back strings complemented by dolphin-like sound effects, this song will never tire you and will put you instead into a dream state.

The best song in the album is "Nananabik Sa 'Yo" by Ryan Cayabyab, who also did "All I Ever Want" and the last track, "The Same Sad Song."

Snapping my fingers to this cute, feel-good love song, I am quite convinced that this is about a woman's excitement and longing for the coming of her prince charming, or a reunion of two lovers separated for a long time.

But the lines "*Ngayon ay kalong kalong ka/ balang araw ang buong mundo'y / matutuwa sa iyo*" and a second listen to the song makes me realize that this is about a mother's thrill over the birth of her child ("*Nananabik sa 'yo/ nang ibuhos ang pag-ibig ko/ malaaman sanang dahilan ng 'yong pagsilang/ dito sa mundong ito*").

This song is very suitable to Sharon's mixed feelings of excitement, nervousness and longing just before the birth of her baby Frankie. Frankie has grown into a beautiful baby ("*Balang araw/ ang buong mundo'y matutuwa sa iyo*"). I finally understand why this song is cute.

"All I Ever Want," another Cayabyab track, unfortunately, is not the best song in the album. But it makes up for its shortcomings with simple but nice lyrics and an old school approach to an OPM hit.

In "My Disguise," Sharon begins with only her vocals, her trademark whispering, so that you know right away that this one's a sad song. ("You gave me the reasons/ to hold you so tight/ then turned like a season/ and never said why"). It rides gradually on Cesar Aguas's guitar work, which transforms into magnificent backdrop for the megasinger, who successfully retains the song's tear-jerking premise.

CUNETA

"Love is On" has a little bounce, a dose of pop, and a dash of a teenybop ambience. Love here is not just on, but is a high ("I think I'm dreamin'/ forget my breathin'/ whenever you say hello"). Fortunately, the song does not go into Britney Spears mode.

Probably the best track in the album is "You're the One," which has a pervading elegance but also simplicity of mood, outstanding lyrics and the gospel attack of the background vocals near the last part.

Although this latest effort from the megastar is not your typical Sharon album of mostly Tagalog songs, it would still win typical Sharon fans. And even if it is not the greatest Sharon album, it's going to stay in my disc changer for a long time, for when I need to emote and turn sentimental.

Tessie repeats standup comedy act

SHOWS

MELDITA telling people how she likes pearl shakes—but with South Sea Pearls.

Ex-starlet Bonnie Buendia out to make a comeback in "Huwag Kang Kikibo, Papasok ang Hito."

Cotton Bud talking about her love affair with John Cuatro-Campos, her association with Ping Lactum and being a secret agent disguised as a Hong Kong *viajera* buying a Prada bag and shabu at the same time.

These are just some of the side-splitting, comical characters in "Teysi @ Tweynti," the one-woman stand-up comedy show of Tessie Tomas at Music Museum.

The series played to SRO audiences for all four nights, a rare thing for a stand-up comedy act. Even more rare was the fact that Tessie received a standing ovation every single night of her performance.

"Teysi @ Tweynti" will have a repeat, Nov. 28, Wednesday, 9 p.m. at Music Museum.

Joining Tessie for the repeat will be special guests Jon Santos and John Lapus, who will reprise their much-applauded "tarayan portion," featuring the three newscasters Mel Dyanggo (Tessie), Karen Dafalong (John) and Korina Panchez (Jon).

"Teysi @ Tweynti" is directed by Floy Quintos, and written by Ricky Lopez and Joel Mercado. Hair and makeup are by Dennis Tan, wardrobe by Maxie Cinco and photography by Raymund Isaac.

The show is a production of Artist House Inc. Tickets are available at Ticket World (891-5610), Music Museum (721-0635 or 721-6726) and Artist House (815-1953, 817 4660 or 816-2496).

'Crossover Presents'

105.1 CROSSOVER presents Concert Queen Pops Fernandez in a special one-night concert, Dec. 6 at Music Museum for the monthly "Crossover Presents" series.

Share an intimate evening with Pops as she celebrates her birthday in an evening of songs.

Joining her onstage are the country's session musicians—Bobby Taylo on bass, Cesar Aguas on guitar, Mel Villena on sax, Roy Mercado on drums, Bond Samson on keyboards, a live string ensemble and The Opera. Musical director is Gerard Salonga.

Tickets are now available at all Ticket World outlets, Robinson's Department Stores in Malate and Galleria, Tower Records Makati and Alabang, and the Music Museum ticketron.

For inquiries, call 891-5610 or tune in to 105.1 Crossover for more details.

Bands at The Prince

THE PRINCE, formerly known as Prince of Wales located at the basement of the Greenbelt New Plaza Bldg. in Makati, continues to delight patrons with easy listening chill out music and new wave, with the likes of Buddha Bar and the latest dance tunes with live bands.

For this month, Concords Band takes centerstage on Wednesdays, as they render a variety of revivals.

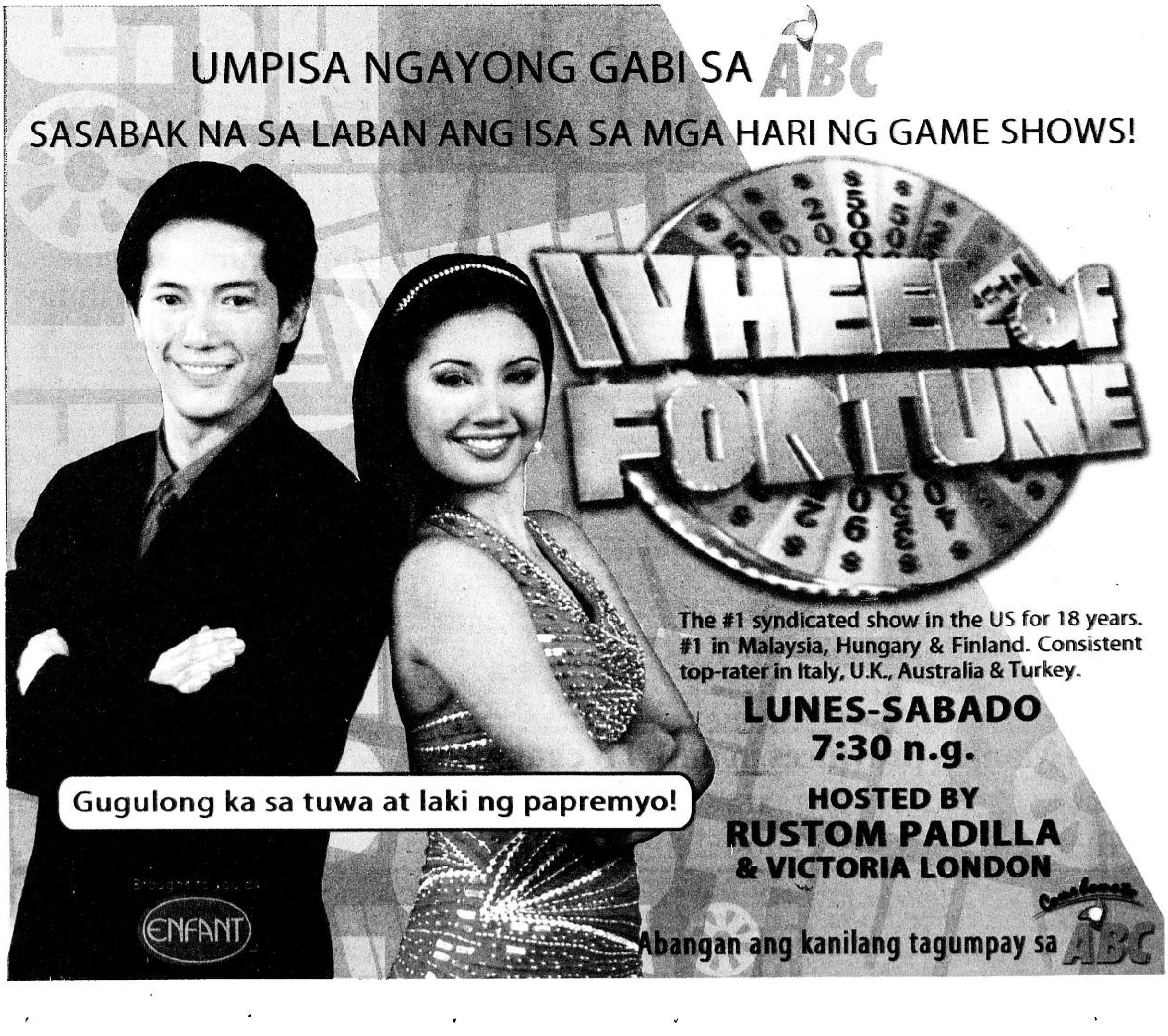
TOMAS. Brings back Meldita and Cotton Bud onstage

FERNANDEZ. Celebrates her birthday in an evening of songs

On Thursdays, Freedom Band plays favorite and pop songs from the '70s to '80s.

Catch Big Bash on Fridays, as they play retro pop hits to the most danceable tunes.

On Saturdays, get ready to rock and roll with Snafu, a band composed mostly of expatriate executives as they perform famous hits from the Beatles, as well as classic rock. Show starts 10 p.m.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Loveless again, Ai-Ai intends to stay lucky in her career

AI-AI de la Alas in a solo concert at the Big Dome?

Even the comedienne herself is having the jitters. Can she fill up the 18,000-seat venue?

The past three years, Ai-Ai staged solo concerts at the Folk Arts Theater, which she packed every time—"Respect Me" in 1998, "Seduct Me" in 1999 and "Abuse Me" last year. This year, it's "Out of This World na Me, Araneta na Kasi," on Dec. 1.

"It's my first time to perform at the Araneta and it's no joke trying to fill up that venue," Ai-Ai allows. "At least *sa* airconditioned venue *na ako magpe*-perform *ngayon.* My manager, **Boy Abunda**, is confident that I could fill it up. Everything I didn't get to do at the FAT, I will do at the Big Dome."

ARANETA and Ai-Ai will happen on Dec. 1.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

During the concert, Ai-Ai will don a dozen outfits created by **Maxie Cinco** and **Ariel Agasang.**

Even her repertoire will be daring. She will attempt to sing Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" with the Monserrat Male Singers.

"I expect to get a standing ovation after singing that," Ai-Ai says without fear.

In her publicity shots, Ai-Ai puts on a futuristic look, thanks to prosthetics expert **Benny Batoctoy,** who transformed her into an alien-like creature.

She will be joined onstage by guests **Pops Fernandez**, Side A and **Jaya,** as well as The Hunks, **Patricia Javier**, Manouevres and the Whiplash Dancers.

Musical director is **Beth Martin**, with **Floy Quintos** as writer and director.

Ai-Ai has been keeping herself fit for the show by going to the gym regularly. "The show requires so much energy," she says. "The dance routines are very exhausting. So *dapat* fit *ako talaga.*"

She also seeks divine guidance by praying the novena. "I can't do it alone, so prayers are very important."

She recently came from successful performances in the United States and New Zealand. She is seen on three regular shows on ABS-CBN—the noontime program "Magandang Tanghali Bayan," and the sitcoms "Arriba Arriba" and "Whattamen."

"After four years of not having a serious relationship, I realized that when there's no man in my life, I'm lucky in my career," she says.

Ai-Ai's concert at the Big Dome is mounted by **Jacob Fernandez**'s JLF Organization, Boy Abunda's Backroom Inc. and JV JBRS Entertainment Inc. It is for the benefit of the Golden Acres Home for the Aged and the Infirm.

No bimbo

NOW that she's an expectant mom, **Priscilla Almeda** who's temporarily based in New York, is definitely not her usual bombshell self. But in her new film, **Gil Portes**' "Huwag Kang Kikibo," the sexy star bares her body again, and she is far more daring than in the controversial "Sutla."

One film critic noted that this is perhaps Priscilla's boldest movie to date.

The mixed crowd of students, teachers and young professionals who watched the premiere of the film at the UP Film Center was stunned by what Priscilla did on screen.

But it would be unwise to dismiss Priscilla as a mere screen bimbo. She has impressive acting credits and has been directed by noted directors. In "Huwag Kang Kikibo," she also displays her acting prowess.

"Huwag Kang Kikibo," based on a script by **Ricky Lee**, is the story of a city girl who becomes hooked on sex and drugs. She finds happiness in the arms of a charismatic cult leader, played by **Raymond Bagatsing**.

CARBUNGCO. Swamped with show biz offers

MOST DARING so far is Priscilla's "Huwag Kang Kikibo" role, says a critic.

Show biz-bound

MUTYA ng Pilipinas-Asia Pacific **Darlene Carbungco,** fourth runner-up in the recent Miss Asia Pacific Quest, is show biz-bound.

After Darlene was crowned Mutya-Asia Pacific, TV and film offers immediately started coming her way. But the 20-year-old Pampanga native did not immediately join show biz.

"I have no show biz background and I am not prepared," Darlene says. "I want to be very sure before I do something."

Darlene says the best time she had with the other Miss Asia Pacific candidates was when they were in Boracay for three days.

"That was where we really bonded," she says. "I became close to Miss Panama and also to Miss Singapore, because she was my roommate."

Born in the United States, Darlene was only three when she first came to Manila. Her dad worked for the US Navy and was stationed at the Subic Naval Base in Olongapo City. Her parents enrolled her in an American school inside the American military base.

"I was still very young when my family moved to Manila so I couldn't recall having a hard time adjusting to a new environment," Darlene says.

"The only difficult time for me was when the Americans left the military bases and I had to transfer to a Filipino school."

But Darlene, who stands 5'5", is at home in both Filipino and English languages and cultures.

"We were raised in the traditional Filipino way," she offers.

She earned a nursing degree at the Angeles University in Pampanga, where she also met her boyfriend, **Mark Lapid**, son of Pampanga Gov. **Lito Lapid.**

The nursing graduate loves reading medical thrillers by **Patricia Cornwell**, watching the medical drama series "ER" and cuddling her cats and dogs.

Since she won the Mutya crown early this year, Darlene has been busy with her new role as ambassador of goodwill. She says she will consider the show biz offers after she completes her Mutya reign.

Miss Peru, **Luciana Parfan**, brought home the Miss Asia Pacific crown. Miss Mexico **Lizzet Jimenez** is first runner-up, Miss Thailand **Wanvisa Kamdangyai** is second runner-up and Miss Colombia **Karol de la Torre** is third runner-up.

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3	THE ONE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	RESERVE

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	WEYT A MINIT
2	TRIP

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	JOY RIDE
3	
4	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	TRIP
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3 (DTS)	WEYT A MINIT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	TRIP
2 (DTS)	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3 (DOLBY)	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
4	WEYT A MINIT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2 (DOLBY)	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
3 (DTS)	WEYT A MINIT
4	TRIP

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	TRIP
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	THE ONE
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3	WEYT A MINIT
4 (DTS)	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	WEYT A MINIT
3 (DTS)	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
4	LAST ERUPTION
5	THE ONE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	CAPT. CORRELLI'S

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	CAPT. CORRELLI'S

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	DOS EKIS
2	THE ONE
3	AMERICAN PIE 2

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	WEYT A MINIT
2	CAPT. CORRELLI'S
3	RESERVE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2 (DTS)	WEYT A MINIT

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	CLOSED

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	AMERICAN PIE 2
2	ANO BANG MERON KA?
3	WEYT A MINIT

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

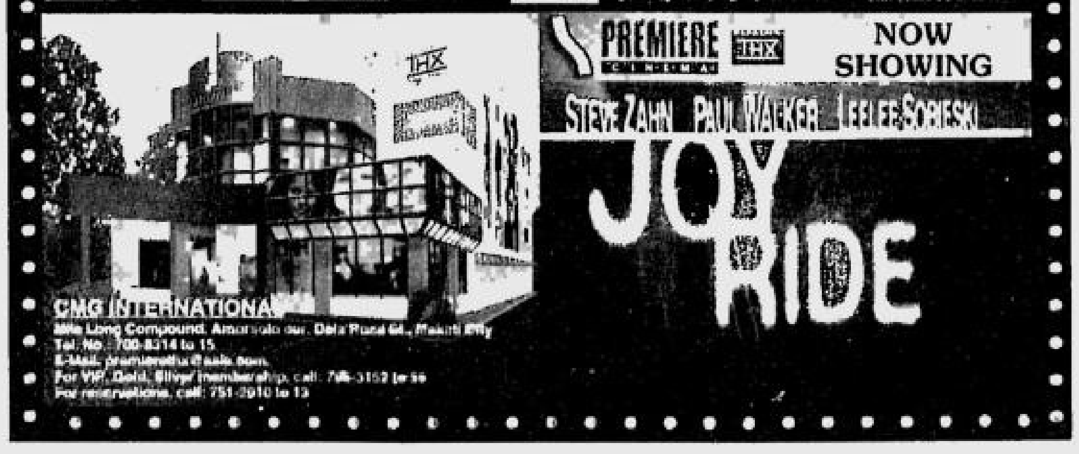
1	JEEPERS CREEPERS
2	TRIP
3	DOWN TO EARTH
4	TRAINING DAY

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	THE ONE
2	WEYT A MINIT
3	SOON TO OPEN
4 (DTS ES)	ANO BANG MERON KA?

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS



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1 THX	CAPTAIN CORRELLI'S
2	JOY RIDE
3	KING OF GLADIATORS
4	SERENDIPITY
5	WEYT A MINIT
6	THE ONE
7	BUBBLE BOY
8	ANO BANG MERON KA?
9	JEEPERS CREEPERS
10	TRIP

ERMITA
536-7809 TO 12

1	SERENDIPITY
2	JOY RIDE
3	WEYT A MINIT
4	BUBBLE BOY
5	ANO BANG MERON KA?
6	TRIP
7	CAPTAIN CORRELLI'S

NOVALICHES
935-3229 to 31

1	JOY RIDE
2	JOY RIDE
3	CAPTAIN CORRELLI'S
4	SERENDIPITY
5	ANO BANG MERON KA?
6	ANO BANG MERON KA?
7	WEYT A MINIT
8	TRIP

IMUS
(046) 471-8188

1	CAPTAIN CORRELLI'S
2	KING OF GLADIATORS
3	ANO BANG MERON KA?
4	TRIP
5	WEYT A MINIT
6	JOY RIDE

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453

1	AMERICAN PIE 2
2	LEGALLY BLONDE
3	DOWN TO EARTH
4	MR. NICE GUY
5	EXTREME FORCE
6	TRIP

METRO EAST
632-9115-16 /633-7641loc. 279

1	ANO BANG MERON KA?
2	BUBBLE BOY
3	CAPTAIN CORRELLI'S
4	JOY RIDE
5	JOY RIDE
6	SERENDIPITY
7	WEYT A MINIT
8	ANO BANG MERON KA?

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	DOS EKIS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TRIP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE ONE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	GHOST OF MARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	JEEPERS CREEPERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	KAMO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	DON'T SAY A WORD
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	THE ONE
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	NAG AAPOY NA LAMAN / TEENAGE SEDUCTION
ODEON	JOY RIDE
ODEON-2	KING OF THE GLADIATOR
ROBEN	WEYT A MINIT, KAPENG MAINIT
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	CROCODILE / ST FRANCIS VILLE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	WEYT A MINIT
REMAR	WEYT A MINIT, KAPENG MAINIT
REMAR-2	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	WEYT A MINIT
B	ANO BANG MERON KA?
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE ONE
CINEMA-2	BUBBLE BOY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
CINEMA-2	TRIP
CINEMA-3	ANO BANG MERON KA?
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JEEPERS CREEPERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	KING OF THE GLADIATOR
CINEMA-6	TRIP
CINEMA-7	DOS EKIS
CINEMA-8	WEYT A MINIT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CAPT. CORRELLIS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JOY RIDE
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	BUBBLE BOY
CINEMA-12	THE ONE
CINEMA-14	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-15	WEYT A MINIT
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	JOY RIDE
CINEMA-2	THE ONE
CINEMA-3	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-4	CAPT. CORRELLI'S MANDOLIN
CINEMA-5	BUBBLE BOY
CINEMA-6	SERENDIPITY
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

ARNALDO. Shows in Manila and Cebu

Busy month for Tin

EVERY DAY is a busy day for budding diva Tin Arnaldo, who is staging a series of shows in Manila and Cebu.

After conquering the Visayas with shows in Bacolod (with Luis Alandy, her costar in ABS-CBN's soap series, "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" as special guest), Iloilo and Roxas City (with Eugene Villaluz), Tin returns for more shows this month.

On Nov. 29, Tin will share the stage with violoinist John Lesaca, flutist Jong Cuenco and saxophonist Tots Tolentino in a show at the Casino Filipino Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City.

On Nov. 30, Tin performs in a solo concert in Balamban, Cebu, with Luis Alandy. The show will be produced by Universal Entertainment.

Tin's final engagement in Cebu is on Dec. 1, in a show at Jiggy's Bar at the Waterfront Hotel. It will be mounted by Scal8 Productions.

After her provincial performances, Tin will give in to the request of her Manila fans to do a repeat of her successful series of shows at Dish at the 3rd Level of Powerplant Mall in Rockwell. She will take center stage at Dish every Wednesday in November.

Aside from her live shows, Tin is busy with TV and stage plays. She is seen daily in the afternoon soap, "Recuerdo de Amor," starring Diether Ocampo and Carmina Villaroel.

She also finished guest appearances in ABS-CBN shows like "Flames," "Maalaala Mo Kaya" and the fantasy series, "Wansapanataym."

Onstage, Tin is playing the role of Paulita in the ongoing stage play, "El Filibusterismo." She also starred in "Ibong Adarna."

For more information on Tin's schedule of shows, call Studio A at 727-1422.

Show biz stars grace Yule event

GARY Valenciano, Mitch Valdes and Spirit of '67 will entertain the crowd in this year's Festival of Trees, the annual tradition of the Makati Garden Club (MGC) and the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), Nov. 21, 7 p.m. at the NBC Tent at The Fort.

Festival of Trees helps raise funds for the programs of the PBSP, which focus on poverty alleviation and protection of the environment.

PBSP and MGC president is Maria Luisa Rubio.

Highlight of the evening is the live auction of an exclusive Anita Magsaysay-Ho painting, which the esteemed artist created just for this event.

For ticket inquiries, call 527-3741.

Nida's memorable movies shown on IBC

"VIVA Box Office," the movie channel on free TV, will pay tribute to the much-lamented actress and movie queen Nida Blanca with the showing of films featuring some of her most memorable portrayals over IBC-13.

"Magdusa Ka," the 1986 film which earned for Nida a best supporting actress grand slam as the unforgiving mother of Dina Bonnevie, airs at 6:30 tonight. Eddie Garcia directs the melodrama.

The heartwarming musical-comedy, "Forgive and Forget," airs Nov. 20. Also directed by Eddie Garcia, the movie stars Sharon Cuneta as the daughter who must cope with the squabbles of her separated movie star parents, played by Nida and Nestor de Villa.

The two made up a successful screen loveteam during their younger days. They got married, had one daughter and later went their separate ways.

Sharon sings and Nida and Nestor once more showcase their dancing prowess in this box-office winner.

Nida returns with Sharon Cuneta in "Sa Hirap at Ginhawa," Thursday, Nov. 22.

Sharon and Gabby Concepcion play roles similar to real life during the early days of their marriage in this movie directed by Leroy Salvador, who also stars opposite Nida.

Nida plays the kind landlady who helps Sharon and Gabby through the hard times.

Radio contest to launch CD

PRIME Music Corporation recently launched a radio contest for its new artist Von Arroyo, who revived such popular songs as "Mr. Lonely," "If You're Not Here" and "But If You Leave Me."

To join, simply tune in to Yes! FM 101.1 and Love Radio 90.7 and call the stations to answer the following questions: Who is the voice behind the hit song "Sing Sa Aming Dalawa" (answer: Von Arroyo) and What is the title of Von Arroyo's latest album under Prime Music? (Answer: "Maisip Mo Lang Ako").

Listeners will win CDs, posters and exclusive souvenir items from Von Arroyo.

"Sino Sa Aming Dalawa" is the carrier single of Von's first album under Prime Music, "Maisip Mo Lang Ako," distributed by Viva Records. It contains nine original compositions by Nonoy Tan, Boy Christopher, Jimmy Borja and other noted songwriters, plus a revival of the old hit, "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes."

Von will formally launch his album on Nov. 21 at Virgin Café in Tomas Morato, Quezon City.

Von will also hold a mall tour: Nov. 22 at Robinson's Place Ermita; Nov. 23 at SM Southmall; and Nov. 30 at Robinson's Place Los Baños.

Von will be joined by other Prime Artists—Yamani, Rea Valle and the boy band Toyz.

Globe airs TV special

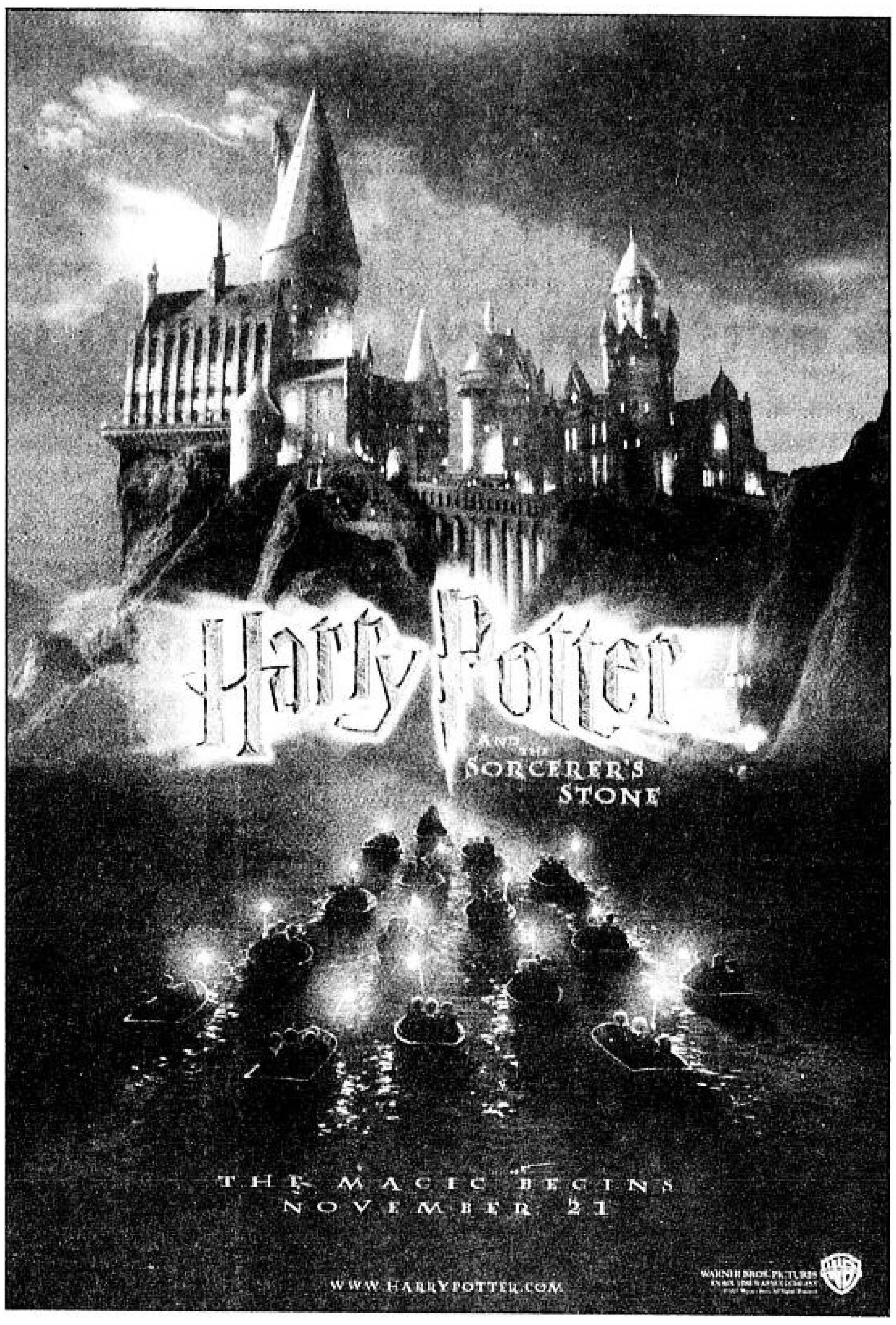
COMBINING today's digital accessories, tomorrow's fashion and the tune of the country's top rockin' bands, Globe Handyphone invites all subscribers and viewers to watch the second episode of its five-part TV special, "Celebr8: A Globe Get Together," Nov. 22, 9 p.m. on Studio 23.

The TV special featured the cutting-edge designs by the metro's revered fashionistas—Rajo Laurel, Milkwear and Young Designer's Guild—and the music of Eraserheads, Pinikpikan, Rage Band, Restrospect and Rachel Alejandro.

By tuning in to the show, Globe Handyphone prepaid and post-paid subscribers can join the polling game, "Text Away To Get Away," where they have a chance to win trips to Davao, Boracay, Cebu and Palawan.

Tune in, text in and win any of these prizes through the biggest texting event this season, "Celebr8: A Globe Get-Together," brought to you by myGlobe, Globe Handyphone's mobile e-services.

ALEJANDRO. Featured performer



POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

JOY RIDE - P 13 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	SERENDIPITY - P 13 12:50, 2:55, 5:00	SERENDIPITY - P 13 11:45, 1:50, 3:55, 6:00, 8:05, 10:10
CAPT. CORRELLI'S - P 13 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	BUBBLE BOY - GP 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	SERENDIPITY - P 13 12:50, 2:55, 5:00

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

SM ADVANCE SCREENING CINEMA

MARIAH CAREY
glitter

Invitational DWRX Screening on Nov. 19, 2001 7:30 pm
SM Megamall Cinema 3
MTRCB RATING P13
Regular showing starts Nov. 21 at the SM CINEMAS.

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

MARIAH CAREY
glitter
www.glittermovie.com

From 'orphan' to pop superstar

Mariah in a heartwarming rags-to-riches music drama

Pop music legend Mariah Carey makes her major feature film debut in Columbia Pictures' GLITTER, an emotional and heartwarming drama with music featuring her hits "Never Too Far" and "Loverboy."

GLITTER is the story of a young singer, Billie Frank, who overcomes a troubled childhood and struggles to find her true family and her true voice.

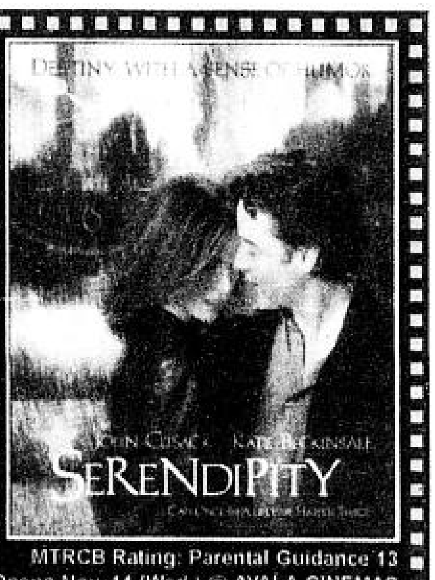
Abandoned as a child by her mother, Billie grows up in an orphanage. Discovered by a charismatic "bad boy" deejay who becomes her lover, she is soon on her way to pop superstardom.

OPENS NOV 21!

Do You Believe in Destiny?
Make it your destiny to watch
the perfect date movie
SERENDIPITY
starring John Cusack & Kate Beckinsale @
THE PERFECT DATE MOVIEHOUSE
AYALA CINEMAS
GLORIETTA 1 & 4 / GREENBELT
ALABANG TOWN CENTER

& GET A CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE YOUR DREAM DATE: Room Accommodation in Oakwood, Regine's Concert for 2 @ OnStage, Dinner for 2 in TGIFridays, Entrance for 2 in Enchanted Kingdom & Movie Tickets for 2 for every 2 SERENDIPITY tickets purchased.

FreshBurst LISTERINE Oakwood SKYFILMS



MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
Opens Nov. 14 (Wed.) @ AYALA CINEMAS
Promo period: Nov. 14 to 27, 2001
See leaflets or call 752-7880 to 83 for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3770, Series of 2001.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
Opens NOV. 21 (Wed.)
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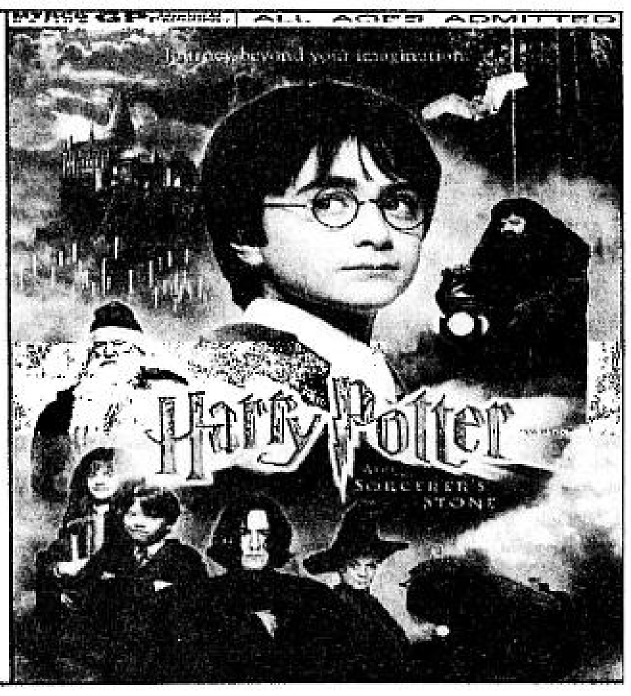
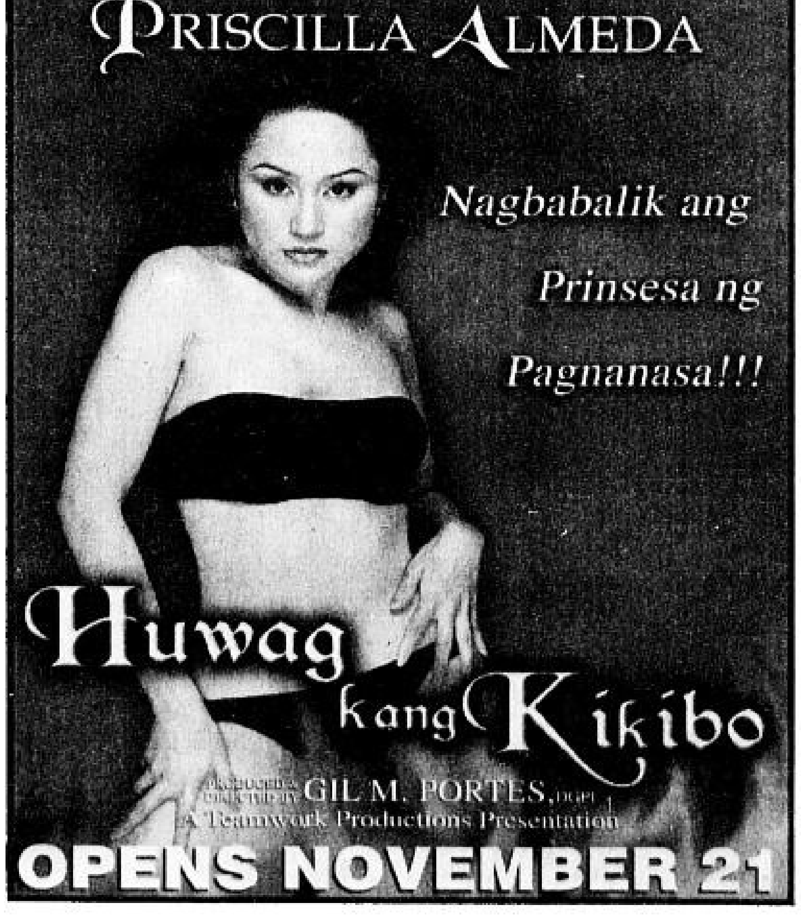

ALL AGES ADMITTED
Journey beyond your imagination
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

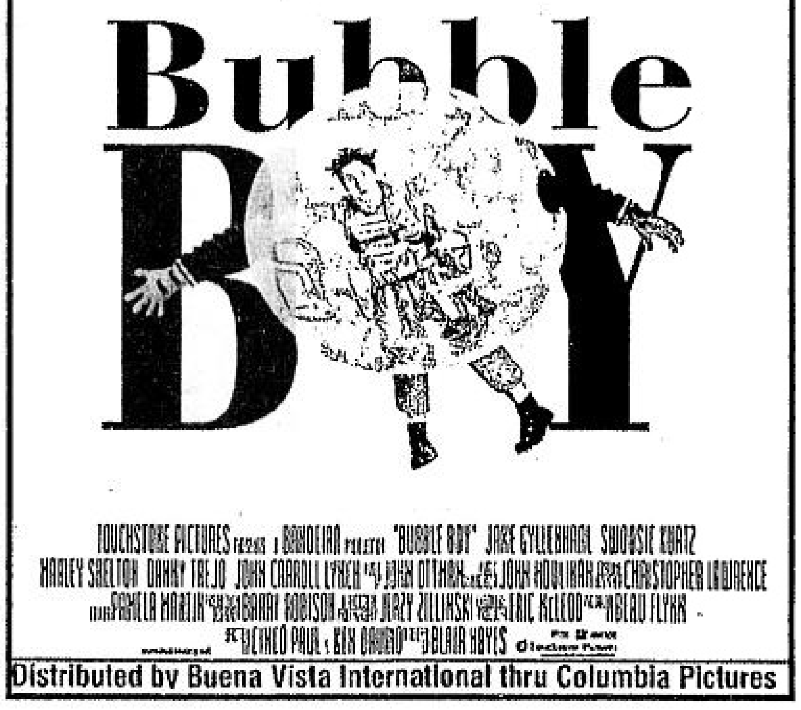
OPENS NOVEMBER 21!
MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED STRICTLY FOR ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted

'pag si MANOY at LONG pinagsama, guguiong ka sa pagtawa!!!
isabel granada
klaudia koronel
eddie garcia
long mejia
KAPITAN AMBO
DIRECTED BY JOVEN M. TAN
FLT FILMS INTERNATIONAL

MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED STRICTLY FOR ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted


PRISCILLA ALMEDA
Nagbabalik ang Prinsesa ng Pagnanasa!!!
Huwag kang Kikibo
GIL M. PORTES
A Teamwork Productions Presentation
OPENS NOVEMBER 21

"LAUGH OUT LOUD" COMEDY
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
LIFE IS AN ADVENTURE. DON'T BLOW IT.



Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

'Ooh, ahh, cheers' and curses for 'Harry Potter' movie

LOS ANGELES—The big-screen version of "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" enchanted fans Friday with its faithfulness to the book, while some critics cursed it for the same reason.

Audiences packed multiplexes throughout the day, with thousands lining up for midnight screenings and parents taking the day off to accompany children to matinees.

The movie opened to a record 3,672 theaters on about 8,200 screens, nearly a fourth of the nation's movie screens.

"Everything looked the way I pictured it in my head, which is about the best thing you could say about an adaptation," said Matt Terl, 25, who watched it in Baltimore.

At a theater on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, Mady Ahern, 45, escorted her daughter Eliza and eight other gabbing, giggling and squealing 9-year-olds from an afternoon screening.

"I cried at the end. I find it a very moving story," the mother said.

The girls, who had the day off because of parent-teacher conferences, were "oohing, ahhing and cheering" throughout the movie, she added.

"Eliza woke up and said, it's like Christmas morning."

Glen DuPont, 39, of Pacific Palisades, California, attended a morning screening in Santa Monica with his son, Charles, and another 7-year-old, but said the action scenes in the movie may have been too intense for them.

"I wound up with two little boys on my lap hiding in their shirts," DuPont said.

Marc Bianchi brought his sons Phillip, 14, and Ben, 11, to a midnight screening in the Philadelphia suburb of Plymouth Meeting. He figured the boys might show up a bit late for school Friday.

"They won't do great on their tests tomorrow, but in the long run, it's nice to do something with my kids," Bianchi said.

While audiences delivered overwhelming praise, many critics were less enthusiastic.

"Wizard School Without the Magic," read the headline in The New York Times, with critic Elvis Mitchell deriding the movie as "the film equivalent of books on tape."

David Germain of The Associated Press said: "The film has no surprises, and if it failed to grab you on the page, it's not likely to grab you on the big screen."

In a lukewarm review, Los Angeles Times critic Kenneth Turan said the movie failed "to transcend the book's emotional territory" in the way "The Godfather" and "The English Patient" did.

"So much is presented just as written that 'Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone' starts to resemble one of those fiendishly exact replicas of great works of art that Sunday painters can be seen working on in galleries of museums," Turan said.

On the other hand, Chicago Sun-Times critic Roger Ebert voiced unconditional praise for the film, calling it "a rip-roaring tale of supernatural adventure."

"I was pretty sure I was watching a classic, one that will be around for a long time, and make many generations of fans," wrote Ebert, who gave the movie four stars.

Analysts predict the film will shatter box-office records this weekend.

The single-day box-office record is held by "Star Wars: Episode I — The Phantom Menace," which took in $28.5 million on opening day in 1999.

"The Lost World: Jurassic Park" delivered the best three-day opening ever, grossing $72.1 million in its first weekend, in 1997.

Directed by Chris Columbus, "Harry Potter" stars Daniel Radcliffe as Harry, and Rupert Grint and Emma Watson as his pals Ron and Hermione.

The adult cast includes Richard Harris as wise schoolmaster Dumbledore, Alan Rickman as the murky Snape and Robbie Coltrane as the kindhearted giant Hagrid.

Created by British author J.K. Rowling, the "Harry Potter" book series debuted in 1997 with "Sorcerer's Stone." It had good reviews but only modest sales until readers began talking it up into a phenomenon whose first four books have now sold tens of millions of copies worldwide.

Rowling is working on the fifth book, "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix."

The moviemakers have already begun work on the second book, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets." *AP*

Harrison Ford to receive Cecil B. DeMille Award

FORD

LOS ANGELES — Actor Harrison Ford is to receive this year's Cecil B. DeMille career-achievement award from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA).

Ford, 59, will receive the prize for his "outstanding contribution to the entertainment field" at the 59th Golden Globe Awards ceremony in Beverly Hills on Jan. 20, HFPA President Dagmar Dunlevy said at a news conference.

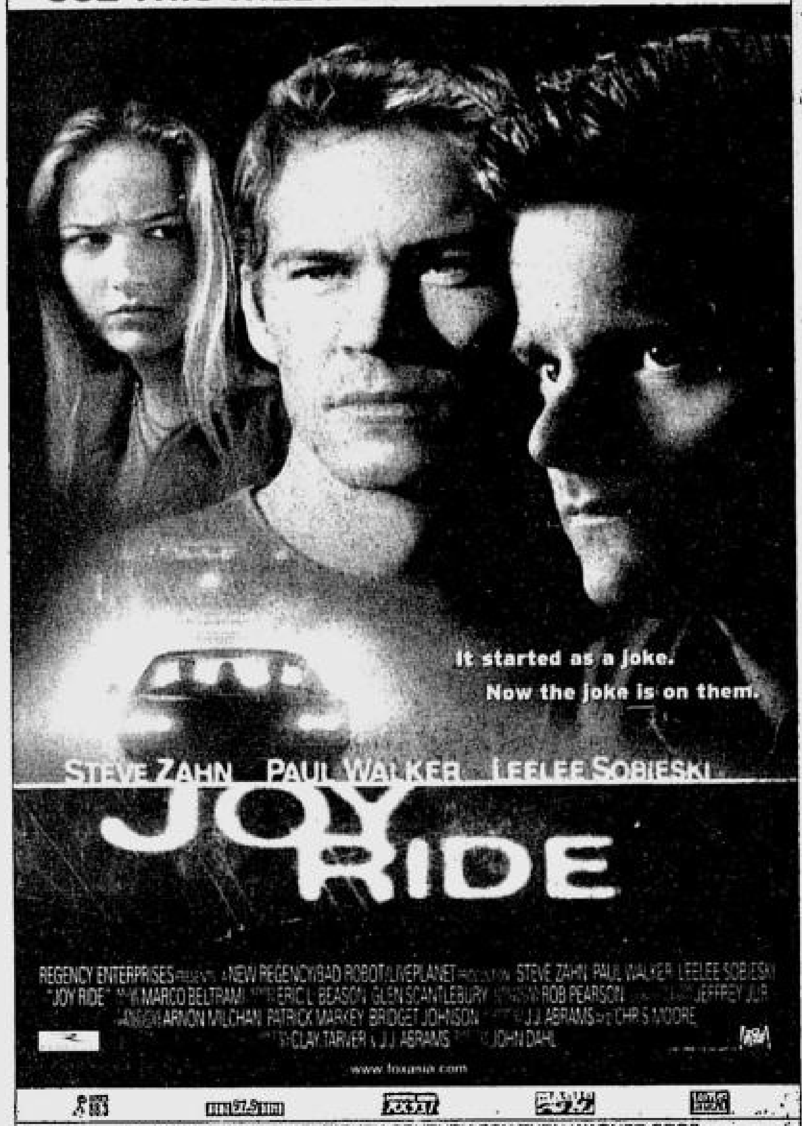
Al Pacino, Barbra Streisand, Jack Nicholson, Shirley MacLaine, Dustin Hoffman, Sean Connery and Sophia Loren are among past recipients of the award created in memory of the legendary director of "The Ten Commandments" and "Cleopatra."

Ford's career was honored last year by the American Film Institute, which each year recognizes an artist "whose talent has in a fundamental way advanced the film art" and "whose work has stood the test of time."

Ford's film career began in 1966, with a now-forgotten film called "Dead Heat on a Merry-Go-Round." But it was his roles as adventurer Han Solo in "Star Wars" (1977) and archaeologist Indiana Jones in "Raiders of the Lost Ark" (1981) which vaulted him to stardom.

Harrison's other major flicks include "Return of the Jedi," "Blade Runner," "Presumed Innocent," "Patriot Games," "The Fugitive" and "Air Force One." *AFP*

MTRCB RATING PG – 13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
FASTEN YOUR SEATBELT
'COZ THIS WILL BE ONE HELL OF A RIDE!


It started as a joke.
Now the joke is on them.
STEVE ZAHN PAUL WALKER LEELEE SOBIESKI
JOY RIDE
www.foxasia.com

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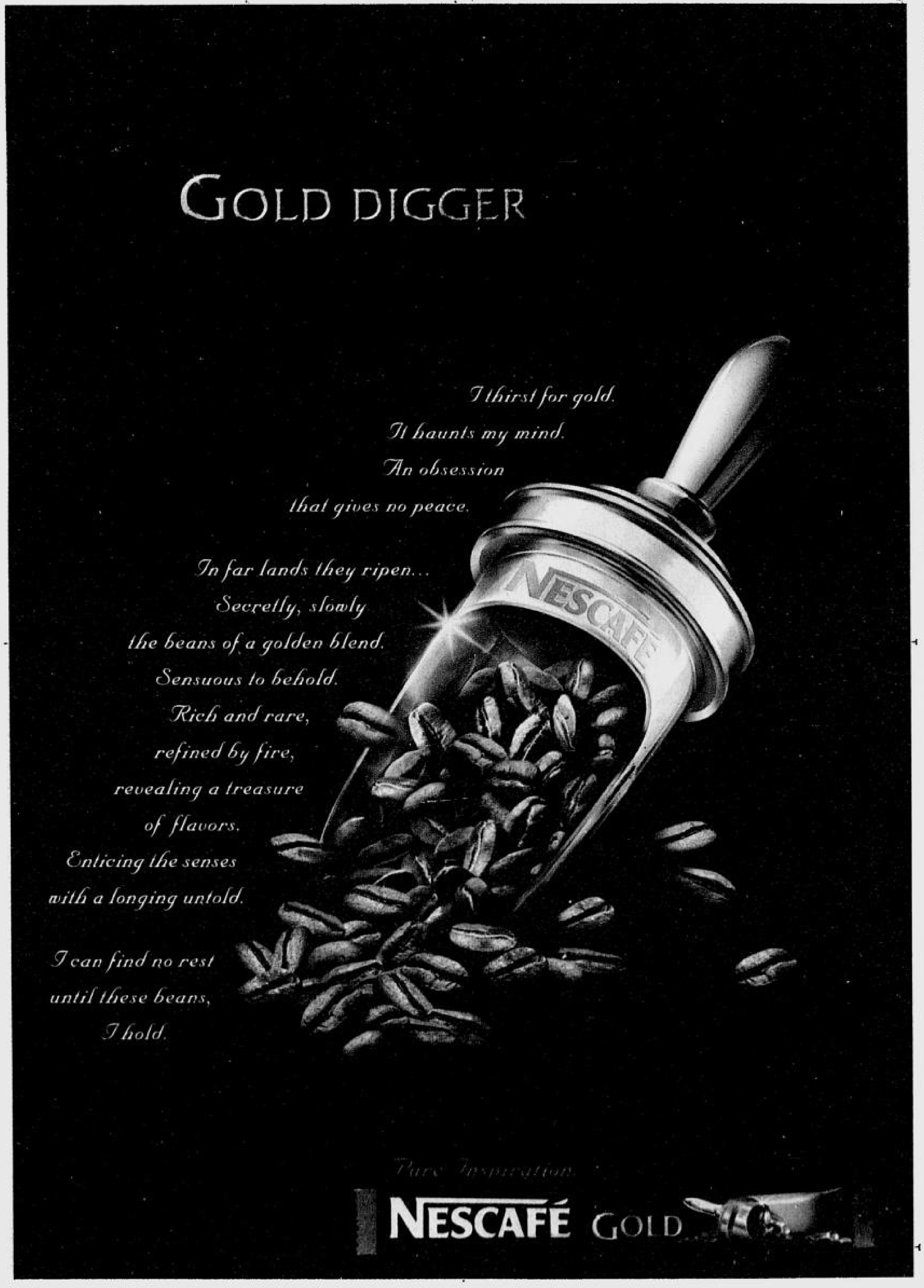

Bitching with the best of them

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

EDU Manzano's sinister and cynical persona on "The Weakest Link" has turned out to be one of the more entertaining creations on the tube this season. We know people who watch the show not for its questions and answers, but to enjoy Edu's latest batch of insults and put-downs—which they proceed to try on their friends, to everyone's bemusement.

It seems like Edu's new snitty persona has made it OK for people to acknowledge the existence of their own bitchy, sarcastic side, and to come up with their own versions of The Perfect Squelch. Edu's latest put-downs:

"This is really something! In that round, your score a measly, *unbelievable* P7,000! *Sino'ng nahulog sa bangin*? Someone jumped off a plane—*wala namang* parachute! Who is stepping on the future of this group?!

"Someone here is the doctor of doom, the king of incompetence!

"*Pumapalya ang makina ni'yo, sunog ang* sparkplug. Not bad—but not good enough!

"*Kaninong telepono ang* cannot be reached? *Kaninong* prepaid card *ang ubos na*? Someone is not concentrating—*hindi nakapag-handa*!

"*Na*-revoke *na ang* permit *ng isa. Sino ang susunod*? May *isang nahihirapan nang humabol*. May expired *na ang* visa. *May* impostor *sa grupo ninyo*!"

But, last week, it turned out that Edu *didn't* have the last, caustic, bitchy word. That "honor" was claimed by a contestant named **Ogie**, who was (unfairly) voted out by the remaining members of his group, despite the fact that he had come up with some really good answers.

In any case, Ogie was asked for his reaction to his groupmates' "verdict," and he had smirked, in true Edu fashion: "*Ito lang ang masasabi ko*: *Bukod kay* Edu Manzano, *ako ang bida dito*. I'm not the Weakest Link.—Goodbye!"

Touche!

Most popular films

THE BIG Hollywood hit in town is "The One" starring **Jet Li**, with a five-day opening gross of more than $22M.

Li is also popular in the States. We saw him being interviewed on an American TV talk show some weeks ago, and the audience gave him a long and loud ovation.

In "The One," parallel universes collide when a rogue agent (Li) assigned to monitor unusual events begins eliminating versions of himself in each alternate reality.

Acquiring more power with each version, he must finally confront the one man (also played by Li) who stands between him and his ultimate goal.

On the local film scene, "Trip" is the big surprise hit, making producers realize that youth films are where the money is. That realization really isn't all that new, however, since people have known for a long time now that, demographically speaking, the majority of Filipinos are under 30 years old.

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McDonald's to firm up control of RP operations

Follow-through buying seen to lift local stock prices
Page B4

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE WORLD'S biggest fast-food chain, McDonald's Corp., is expected to firm up control of its Philippine operations after it obtained the Department of Trade and Industry's go-ahead to engage in local retailing under the retail trade liberalization law.

The Philippines has long been considered as one of a handful of countries where McDonald's has failed to dominate the fast-food industry because of the supremacy of Jollibee Foods Corp., a wholly Filipino-owned corporation.

In a memorandum to Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II, DTI executive director Lucita P. Reyes said the BOI management committee had pre-qualified McDonald's to engage in retail trade based on the requirements listed under the Retail Liberalization Law.

McDonald's had complied with the capital and network requirement with its net worth of P9.204 billion and 28,700 stores nationwide. The firm also meets the reciprocity clause in the law as Filipino retailers are allowed to operate in the United States.

Reyes said the approval would make the Philippines an attractive retail site for other businesses of similar magnitude. Prior to the enactment of the law liberalizing the retail industry, this sector has been closed to aliens since the 1950s. The Retail Trade Law has opened the door for McDonald's to own up to 100 percent of the business.

Based on its plan submitted to the DTI, McDonald's, through its holding firm McDonald's Restaurant Operations Inc., will effect the merger of its 40-percent owned subsidiary in the Philippines, Golden Arches Development Corp., and McGeorge Food Industries of George Young, the Philippine franchise holder. Golden Arches, which handles the purchase or least of McDonald's stores, will be the surviving entity. McGeorge Food issues the franchises.

McDonald's will convert the $1.5 million in receivables from McGeorge into equity in the post-merger Golden Arches. McDonald's said a "proposed local partner" would put in $1 million into the merged entity. It did not identify the investor.

The move by McDonald's has bolstered speculation that the American fast-food giant had long wanted to have direct control of the Philippine business and beat Jollibee for dominance in the industry.

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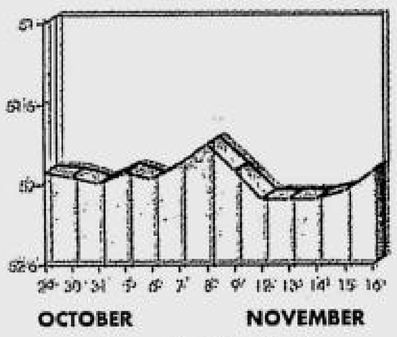

GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

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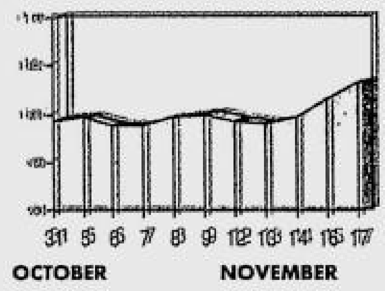

(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks to rise

SOME follow-through buying is expected to pull prices of local stops higher this week despite some profit-taking.

Last week's rally was inspired by the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the further drop in oil prices last week.

The Phisix closed at a month-high of 1,033.34 last week, gaining 3.36 percent from the previous week's close after a long struggle to rise from the 1,000 level.

Although vulnerable to profit-taking, a technical support for the Phisix is seen at 1,012 to 1,018.

Analysts said the market would still see some volatility this week as bulls and bears wrestle. Others noted that warnings of retaliation from terrorist Bin Laden would likely limit the market's upside.

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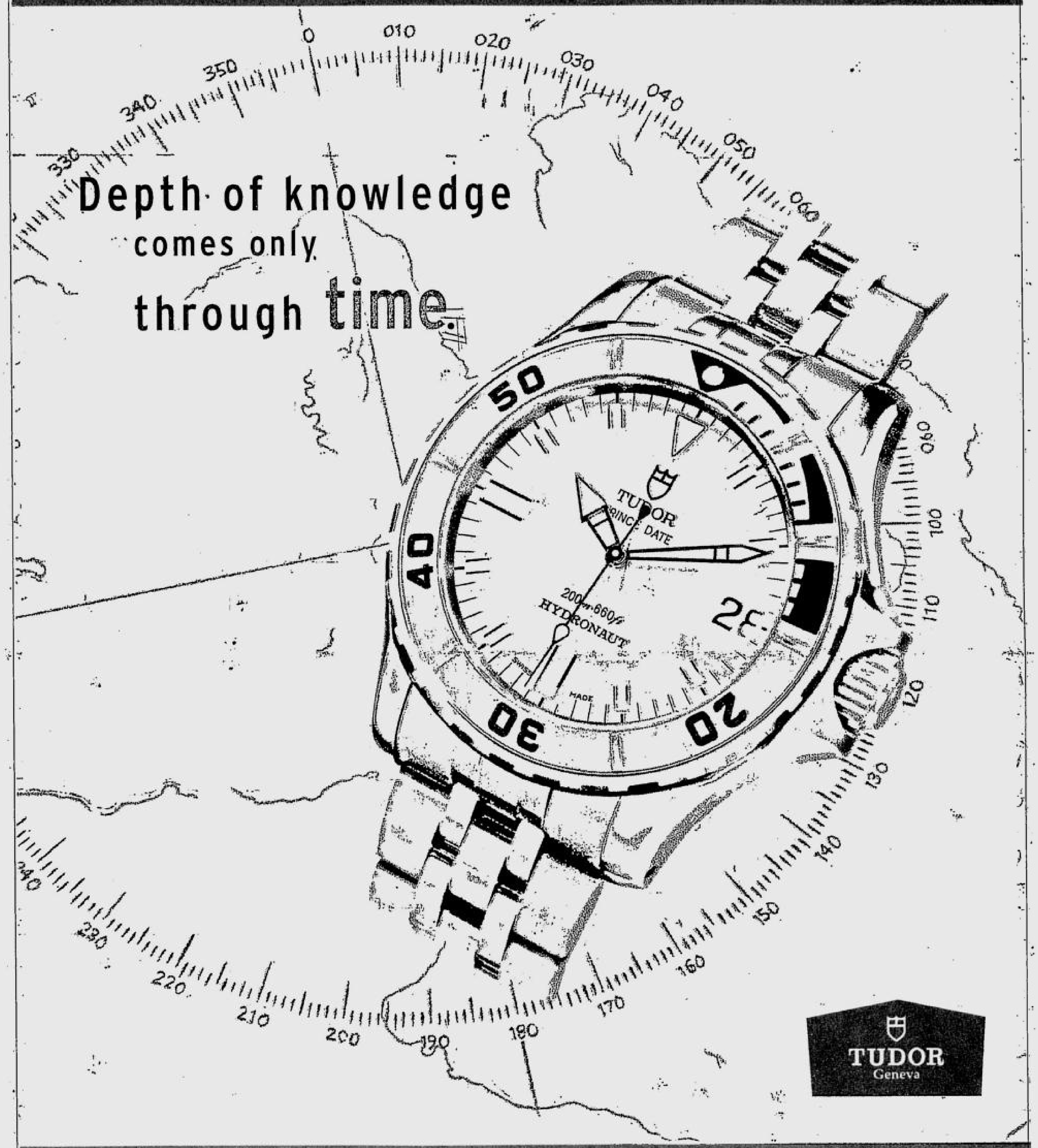

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3-YEAR PROGRAM

PLDT draws up measures to cope with debt problem

By Doris C. Dumlao

TELECOMMUNICATIONS giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. has drawn up several belt-tightening measures to free up $600 million and partially cover $1.3 billion worth of debts maturing over the next three years.

The measures, which were disclosed to stock market analysts during a recent briefing, included limiting its capital outlays for fixed line investments below P10 billion, as well as minimizing cash support for subsidiaries Smart Communications Inc., Pilipino Telephone Corp. and ePLDT.

In the case of Piltel, for instance, the target was to limit cash support to about $60 million a year until the mobile phone subsidiary, which has recently restructured its debts, has regained a profitable foothold.

The third measure, which was already announced earlier, was to defer all acquisitions, such as that of GMA Network Inc.

PLDT's debt burden was the market's biggest concern to date, especially since the company was forced to defer a $250-million bond issue last September due to heightened jitters which arose from the terrorist attacks in the United States.

Company officials assured analysts, however, that its three-pronged belt-tightening strategy, along with the projection that bleeding mobile unit Piltel would break even by mid-2003, would be able to chalk up $200 million in internally generated cash each year in the next three years.

The target is to raise $600 million from internally generated funds to cover almost half of the company's maturing debts until 2004.

The cost-cutting measures are on top of initiatives to sell a 10- to 15-percent stake in wireless unit Smart Communications Inc. by the middle of next year. Analysts were told that this would raise about $350 million.

The Inquirer reported last May that PLDT was wooing NTT DoCoMo Inc., the biggest mobile phone provider in Japan and a subsidiary of PLDT's strategic partner Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, to invest in Smart. A deal was supposed to have been finalized before the end of this year.

Dutch bank ABN Amro was tapped by PLDT as adviser for its strategic options on Smart.

After raising $600 million from internally generated cash and another $350 million from the sale of a minority stake in Smart, PLDT officials said the balance of $350 million could be covered by refinancing schemes.

PLDT also confirmed that it was renegotiating with existing creditors to extend additional credit lines or possibly extend maturities. It was earlier reported that among those which had given a favorable response to PLDT was German lender Kreditanstalt Fur Wierderaufbau (KfW).

ATK Kim Eng Securities analyst Martin Enrile lauded PLDT's "concrete" initiatives to address its debt woes and noted that the index heavyweight was still a "long-term buy."

"We believe these initiatives are neither unreasonable nor heavily reliant on external factors. Management formulated its debt management strategy with the likelihood of a global economic slowdown in 2002 to 2003," Enrile said.

Equitable PCI reduces BSP obligation to ₱6.1B

By Clarissa S. Batino

EQUITABLE-PCI Bank has reduced its outstanding loans from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas by another P3.2 billion last Friday, leaving its obligation at only P6.1 billion.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the bank would likely settle its entire obligation early 2002, if not in the remaining weeks of this year. Before the last payment, Equitable PCI's loans with the central bank stood at P9.3 billion.

He said Equitable-PCI's significant recovery of its deposits had allowed it to substantially reduce its P30-billion emergency assistance from the central bank since late 2000 to early this year.

So far, the country's fourth largest lender had already settled P23.9 billion of its outstanding loans or about 80 percent of the total.

The bank ran to the central bank for assistance late last year when it experienced heavy withdrawals because of its involvement in the "juetengate" scandal.

Reyes said the bank was able to realize significant earnings from its dollar remittance business given that dollar inflow was normally healthy toward the holiday season.

The local lender wanted to retire its obligations with the BSP at the soonest time because the central bank loan carries an interest of 3 percentage points over treasury bill rates.

Sources said the bank even had to borrow funds from the interbank market to help settle the expensive advances from the BSP.

Equitable-PCI had reported last week a net income of P113.7 million in the first nine months of the year. Although still positive, the current level was only 10 percent of its P1.178 billion in net earnings during the same period last year.

The bank said it expects to make final payments on its BSP loan by the first quarter next year so that it could focus on its "steady growth and long-term profitability."

Formerly the country's third largest, Equitable-PCI Bank dropped to fourth in terms of assets this year with only P241.04 billion during the third quarter, which was 9.3 percent lower than its year-ago level of P265.66 billion.

Compared to the second quarter, however, the bank's asset base had improved by about 2 percent from P236.25 billion.

As of the third quarter, Equitable-PCI's deposit base of P135.62 billion was 19.2 percent lower than its level a year ago of P167.82 billion. However, the deposit base improved by 2.29 percent from P132.58 billion in the second quarter.

A year ago, depositors of Equitable-PCI withdrew their funds after the bank was dragged into the juetengate scandal primarily because of the friendship of its former chair George Go with ousted President Estrada.

The Go family owns 31 percent of Equitable-PCI but the government, with the combined 25 percent of the Social Security System and the 12 percent of the Government Service Insurance System, ended up as the single biggest stockholder.

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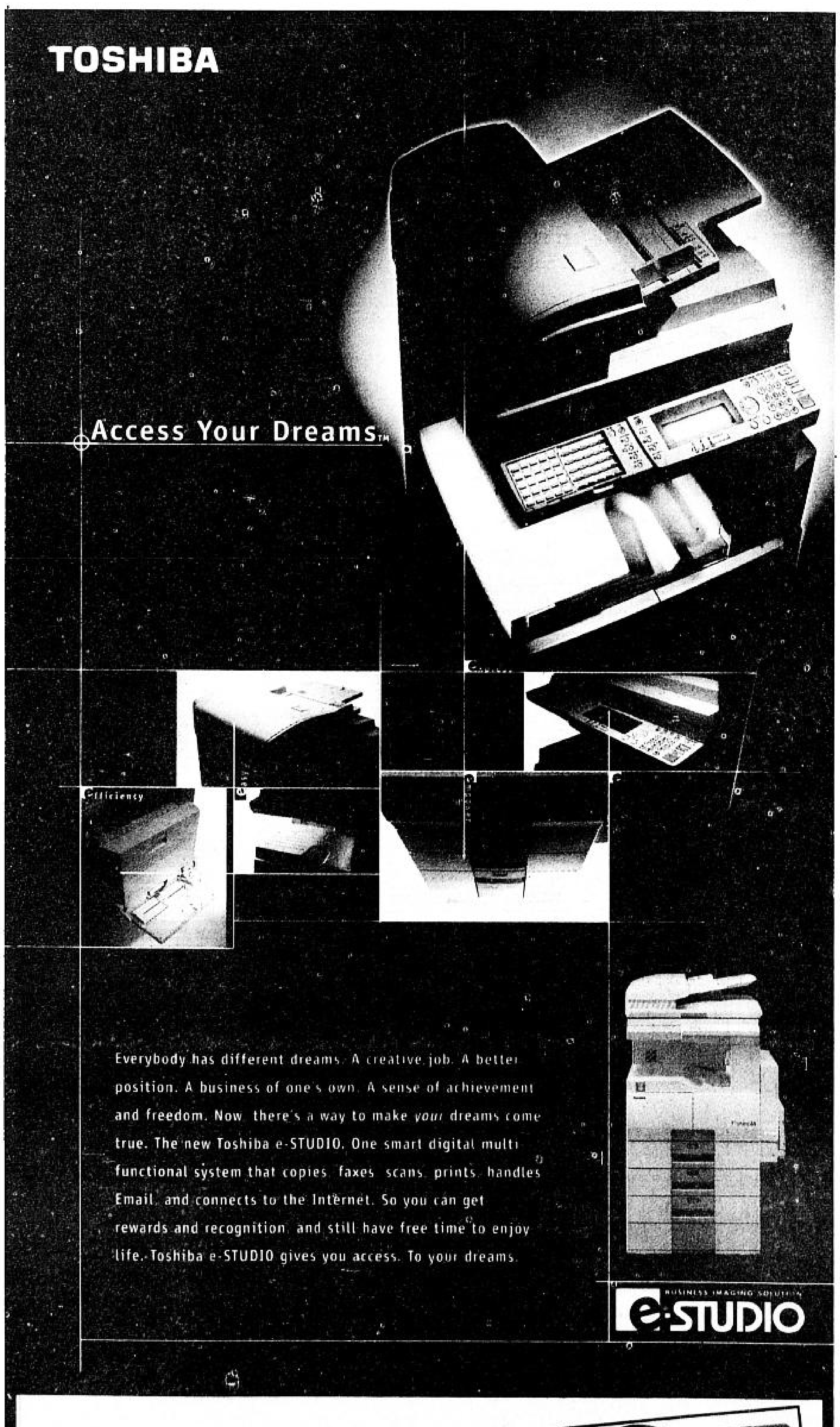

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DR. KATHLEEN HASTINGS

Ford pushes uniform excise tax on new vehicles

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FORD Motor Co. Philippines Inc. is continuing to lobby for tax reforms in the local automobile industry in order to level the playing field and plug the loopholes in tax collections.

Ford Philippines president Terry Emrick said the excise tax on vehicles should be based on retail prices, imposed equally among all units regardless of brand or model, and should not exceed 10 percent.

Emrick said this was the most transparent, simplest and fool-proof way of collecting taxes from the industry, which has long been mired in controversy over the exemptions granted to select vehicles, specifically the Asian utility vehicle (AUV).

Ford has complained about the exemption granted to AUVs because this has allowed some assemblers to sell their high-priced sport utility vehicles tax free by putting jump seats in their compartments. Based on Bureau of Internal Revenue rules, vehicles that have a capacity of at least 10 passengers are exempted from the excise tax.

Emrick does not see the logic in the exemption granted to AUV, which, he said, costs more than cars that are not tax-free. He claimed that the average selling price of AUVs was P771,000 compared with the P668,000 selling price for compact sedans.

Earlier, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II decided to retain the tax exemption of AUVs because of their flexibility in passenger and cargo loading and their potential as an export product of the Philippines with their high local content.

By basing the excise tax on the retail price and not on engine size, Emrick said the government would be assured of collecting taxes on all new vehicles sold in the country. Emrick said the excise tax should not exceed 10 percent or else it would impact on other sectors in the industry.

The government is currently reviewing the excise taxes on vehicles currently based on engine size—15 percent for 1600 cc gas and 1800 cc diesel engines; 35 percent for 2-liter gas and 2.3-liter diesel engines; 50 percent for 2.7-liter and 3-liter diesel engines; and 100 percent for engines more than for 2.7-liter and 3-liter diesel engines.

But AUV assemblers Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. (Tamaraw Revo), Mitsubishi Motor Philippines Corp. (Adventure) and Isuzu Philippines Corp. (Hi-Lander) have vigorously opposed plans to impose excise taxes on their units because it would derail the development of these hybrid models by jacking up their sticker prices excessively and encourage the sale of more expensive and gas-guzzling models.

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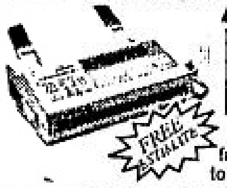

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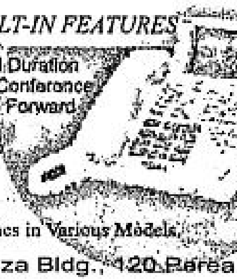

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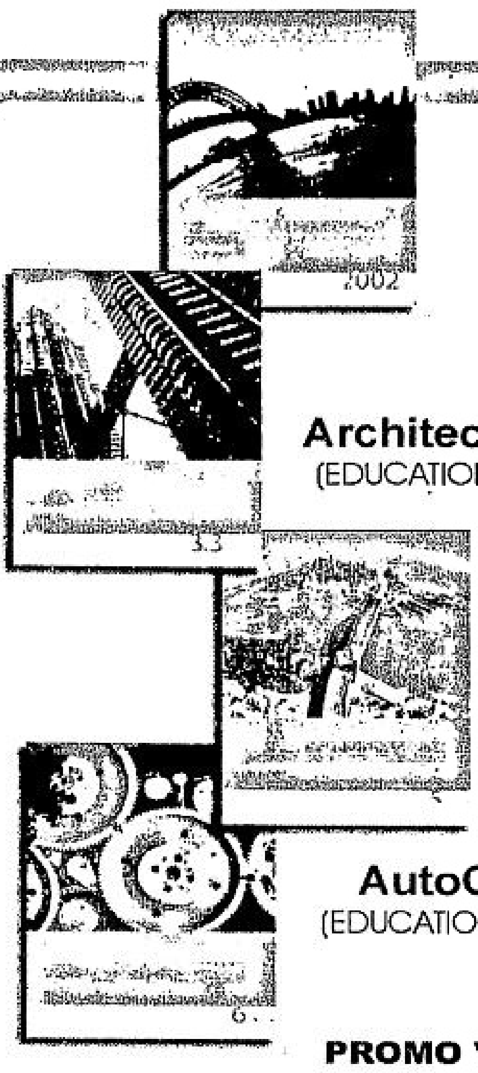

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Follow-through buying seen to lift prices of local stock

By Doris C. Dumlao

MARKET PLAY

AFTER a sharp rally inspired by the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the further drop in oil prices last week, the local stock market is still expected to firm up this week despite some profit-taking.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index would see a "Santa Claus" rally linked to the nearing Christmas season and would likely stay above the 1,000 level.

The Phisix closed at a month-high of 1,033.34 last week, gaining 3.36 percent from the previous week's close after a long struggle to recover past the 1,000 level.

"The market might correct but it's still generally bullish," Roxas said.

Although vulnerable to profit-taking, a technical support for the Phisix is seen at 1,012 to 1,018.

AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan said the withdrawal of Taliban forces from the Afghan capital of Kabul has brought a change of heart in investors' perception.

"Investors cheered the development as it raised hopes that the US-led coalition may be winning the war against terrorism. The surprisingly effortless success in Kabul easily overshadowed the news of another plane crash in New York City," he said.

Oil price drop

He also said the continuing drop in global oil prices was boosting market sentiment. In its latest meeting in Vienna last week, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries failed to pull up oil prices, which have fallen to two-year lows due to the sharp drop in global demand for crude. Opec proposed a reduction of up to 1.5 million barrels a day but some members were not willing to heed the call without a proportionate reduction by Russia, the world's second biggest oil exporter.

Vistan said the market would still see some volatility this week as bulls and bears wrestle.

"We had a great run last week, but profit taking may put a damper on the market as gains are consolidated. On the other hand, the slowly improving volume turnover and market breadth may keep the market from testing its recent lows," he said.

"The latest developments in Afghanistan may help the market by reversing some of the prevalent negative psychology. Confidence will improve further each day as long as we don't get any fresh bad news like terrorist attacks or from corporate earnings and the economic fronts," he said.

But Vistan said warnings of retaliation from terrorist Bin Laden would likely limit the market's upside.

"The higher the market goes, the more we are going to run into some skepticism and profit-taking. Investors will curtail their buying or secure profits as they are reminded of the weak economy. We are still wary of investors making bigger commitments. We believe that investors should continue to adopt a conservative stance on stocks until the terrorism threat is ruled out," he said.

Encouraging rally

BPI Securities analyst Spencer Yap said: "The market's rally this time around is rather encouraging. Not only was the buying broad-based (a wider swath of issues) but volumes had also moved higher in concert with the accumulation."

"It may be that the market will consolidate above the 1,000 level. However, the prognosis for the Philippine economy remains clouded given the uncertain timeframe for a recovery in the US economy. As a whole, most companies will continue to be challenged in the coming year," he said.

Yap said among the possible market movers this week are consumer-based companies San Miguel Corp., SM Prime Holdings, power firms First Philippine Holdings and Meralco, and infrastructure firms Globe Telecoms, Ayala Corp. and International Container Terminal Services Inc.

Meanwhile, the market is also eagerly awaiting news about the sale of the stake held by Metro Pacific Corp. in Bonifacio Land Corp., developer of the 150-hectare Fort Bonifacio Global City. Expectations that the group was nearing a deal with the Ayala group had also boosted the share price of MPC last week.

Gov't veto power delaying deal on PNB

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration wants taipan Lucio Tan to allow the government to have a veto power in Philippine National Bank even after a joint sale in the next two to three years would leave both parties with only about 8 percent in the bank.

A highly-placed government source said that while the government and Lucio Tan have agreed to sell close to 37 percent out of what would become a 45-percent stake each in PNB once the debt-to-equity conversion deal has been signed, the veto power was reportedly delaying the agreement.

A veto power, which is being discussed as part of the exit mechanism for both parties, would give the government a final say on any major decision in the bank even if it would end up with a stake of only about 8 percent.

The government and Tan have yet to sign a debt-to-equity agreement that would convert part of the P25 billion in emergency loans extended to PNB into equity. After the conversion, both groups would end up with an equity stake of 44.98 percent each.

Of the P25 billion, of which P15 billion was owed to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and P10 billion to Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., PNB had paid P1.1 billion to the central bank.

The government explained that an exit mechanism must be discussed as part of the debt-to-equity deal to ensure a long-term recovery of the bank.

The veto power was raised by the government after Tan had insisted on getting a right-of-first refusal to buy the 67-percent block that the government and the taipan were supposed to sell jointly.

To control 67 percent of the bank, an investor must buy close to 74 percent of the government and Tan's combined stake.

Sources pointed to the veto power as the issue that Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had referred to as pending and had prevented the two groups from finalizing the term sheet for the debt-to-equity conversion.

"Camacho refuses to sign unless Tan would agree to give the government the veto power," according to a well-placed source. The taipan had refused to budge and could be referring to the issue during an earlier interview as the "new condition" the government had raised that was delaying the debt-to-equity agreement.

But the source said the taipan should agree to the deal because he might end up controlling the bank anew after the government had rehabilitated it and brought it back to profitability.

"In that case, Tan would end up to be the winner because it was government money that was being used to rehabilitate the bank," another source said.

Last week, both the government and Tan reported that they have agreed on several important points including the P40 per share price to be used for the conversion of P7.8 billion of PNB debts into government equity.

The conversion would raise the government's equity from 16 percent and dilute Tan's share from 67 percent.

The government would also offset P10 billion of its advances from PNB, and the remaining P6.1 billion would be restructured by the BSP over a 10-year period with an interest rate of one percent over the 91-day treasury bill rate.

The taipan had said he was ready to sign the agreement even as early as last week unless new issues would be raised by the government that could delay the deal.

On management control in PNB, the two groups have agreed to nominate one independent director each and appoint four representatives each to the 11-member board.

The government would nominate the names for chair, chair of the executive committee, president, chief financial officer and corporate secretary, while Tan would choose from among the names given.

The taipan, in turn, would nominate the general counsel, assistant corporate secretary and deputy chief finance officer, while the government would select from the list.

Both groups have also agreed in principle to an exit mechanism wherein the government and Tan would sell their combined shares jointly at the appropriate time. But the terms and mechanics of the joint sale are still being threshed out.

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, November 16, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45	47.5	45	46.5	483,400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.5	284,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	164	167	164	166	95,800
Philippine National Bank	47.5	48	47	47	577,100
Security Bank Corp.	16.5	17.5	16.5	17.5	16,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	15.5	15.5	14.25	14.25	763,600
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.27	190,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	221	242	221	242	70
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1380	1380	1380	970
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1115	1120	1105	1115	11,540
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24.5	24.5	24.25	24.25	17,200
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	760,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	570	580	570	575	1,500
Ipeople Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	300,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	20,000
Piltel	0.27	0.3	0.27	0.3	200,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	385	392.5	380	380	27,960
Ivantage Corp.	0.46	0.48	0.46	0.47	250,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.014	0.017	0.014	0.017	268,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	21.75	22.5	21.75	22.5	72,800
Manila Electric Co. B	26	27	26	26.5	4,832,300
Petron Corp.	1.12	1.2	1.12	1.16	12,366,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.34	1.4	1.34	1.38	2,640,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	1,100,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corporation	2	2.02	2	2.02	13,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	307,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	435,600
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.5	12,000
RFM Corporation	1.9	1.94	1.88	1.92	15,284,000
San Miguel Corp. A	40.5	40.5	40	40.5	62,700
San Miguel Corp. B	51	51.5	51	51.5	60,900
Universal Robina Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	50,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.35	4.55	4.35	4.55	2,623,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	30,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	300
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.53	0.5	0.5	330,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	15,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	10	9	10	21,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.58	0.52	0.55	20,280,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.4	200,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	2,600,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.12	0.1	0.11	6,100,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	130,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.67	0.75	30,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22.25	22.75	22.25	22.75	818,900
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.42	1.52	1.42	1.52	786,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.59	0.6	0.57	0.59	2,400,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.29	0.25	0.26	23,200,000
Music Corp.	0.38	0.4	0.37	0.38	2,580,000
Philtread Hdgs. Corp. B	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.34	880,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	25,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	300,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	340,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	460,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	10,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	25,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	200,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.22	0.3	0.22	0.28	240,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	350,000
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24	24	23.75	23.75	1,509,000
Equitable Pci Bank-War	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	60,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	565	565	565	565	970
Jollibee Warrants	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	400
Omico Corporation Warrant	0.0008	0.001	0.0008	0.001	79,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	5,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.0042	0.0048	0.0042	0.0048	218,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.6	7,376,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Cityland Development Corp.	-	-	-	-	-
Cebu Holdings Inc.	-	-	-	-	-
C & P Homes Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.16	940,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.26	4,590,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.21	0.2	0.205	3,220,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.16	1.22	1.14	1.2	9,072,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	17,000
SM Development Corp.	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.86	270,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.4	5.7	5.4	5.6	3,861,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	10,600,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.14	0.155	0.14	0.155	60,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0028	0.003	0.0028	0.003	4,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	13,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	10,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	30,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	6,800,000
Interport Res.	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	2,000,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	4,400,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,423,380	96,218,410.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	680,367,530	347,554,905.00
PRO	29,456,000	68,641,140.00
Mining	27,810,000	273,950.00
OIL	12,200,000	155,800.00
GRAND TOTALS :	752,256,910	512,844,205.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	405.03	UP 5.81
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,458.67	UP 18.23
PRO	449.62	UP 12.77
Mining	954.71	UP 9.25
OIL	1.17	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	677.31	UP 5.37
Composite	1,033.34	UP 17.48

NO. OF ADVANCES: 53; NO. OF DECLINES: 9; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 36; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 98 NO. OF TRADES: 3,133

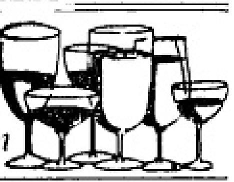
CURRENCIES

Nov. 16, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.133273	1.000000	52.0440
Japan	Yen	0.009267	0.008177	0.4256
United Kingdom	Pound	1.623300	1.432400	74.5478
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145478	0.128370	6.6809
Switzerland	Franc	0.682284	0.602047	31.3329
Canada	Dollar	0.714098	0.630120	32.7940
Singapore	Dollar	0.618768	0.546001	28.4161
Australia	Dollar	0.587492	0.518403	26.9798
Bahrain	Dinar	3.006189	2.652661	138.0551
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302206	0.266667	13.8784
Brunei	Dollar	0.619614	0.546747	28.4549
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000094	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.025507	0.022507	1.1714
UAE	Dirham	0.308625	0.272331	14.1732
Korea	Won	0.000891	0.000786	0.0409
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.882400	45.9236
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.451164	23.4804
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134521	7.0010
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.400416	20.8393
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.064127	3.3374
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021874	1.1384
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000456	0.0237
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.148409	7.7238
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004401	0.2290
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005303	0.2760
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021874	1.1384
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.120417	58.3110

MPC in play

COCKTALES



By Victor C. Agustin

AN AGITATED Manuel V. Pangilinan called up all the way from the United States, where he was traveling with President Macapagal-Arroyo, to say that he was and never been a party to the proposed management buyout of Metro Pacific Corp.

Cocktales reported on Friday that a management group led by Metro Pacific president Ricardo Pascua had submitted a bid to Metro Pacific's parent company, First Pacific of Hong Kong, to acquire either the publicly listed Metro Pacific or its majority stake in the overextended Bonifacio Land Corp.

Pangilinan, who as MPC chair is Pascua's boss, said he could not be part of the management buyout as speculated here since that would put him in an awkward, and possibly even criminal, conflict-of-interest position as he is also the managing director of First Pacific.

On the part of Pascua, the MPC president has been specifically "quarantined from the (bidding) process" by the Hong Kong parent and the financial adviser ING to avoid any hint of impropriety, Pangilinan added.

More than the possible conflict-of-interest issue, the import of Pangilinan's clarification was to confirm rumors that the publicly listed Metro Pacific has indeed been put in play.

First Pacific apparently wants a creative way to solve the multibillion-peso debt burden of its ambitious Fort Bonifacio Global City project, and the proposed solutions would revolve around either the disposal of its majority stake in landlord Bonifacio Land Corp. or even better/worse, depending on your perspective, entirely spin off its local property holding company, Metro Pacific Corp.

Other than the Pascua group and its presumably foreign partner(s), taipan John Gokongwei Jr., possibly in partnership with Singapore Land, and the Ayalas have submitted takeover bids for the Metro Pacific Group's stake in Bonifacio Land.

The Ayalas have joined forces with another Metro Pacific insider, developer Carlos Rufino, who had earlier, in partnership with leading local families, acquired also from a distressed developer a 5.2-hectare slice of land bordering the Manila Golf Club.

The Ayalas' take-it-or-leave-it bid expires today, and the initial reaction from Hong Kong, if the pro-Metro Pacific grapevine is correct, is that the takeover price from its competitor is "bordering on insult."

Hardship assignments

AN ambassadorial posting may indeed be a glamorous way to cap a career but, given the government's precarious finances, such an honor entails not an inconsiderable financial strain on the part of the appointee.

The country's newly designated ambassadors to Washington and Madrid, Albert del Rosario and Joseph Delano Bernardo, respectively, have both requested the Manila Golf Club, where the two gentlemen have been members of good standing, that they be exempted from paying the monthly dues for the duration of their overseas assignments.

The current membership upkeep at the country's premiere golf membership club amounts to P7,500 a month, or P90,000 a year, roughly equivalent to an entry-level salary.

While many members are sympathetic to Del Rosario and Bernardo's plight, there is a school of thought within the club that says providing such an exemption may open the floodgate to similar pleas.

The usual creative solution employed by members who suffer liquidity mismatch is to assign their playing rights to others willing to pick up the tab in exchange for the joys of incessantly whacking tiny balls and walking for hours under the sun.

Rudeness did it

AND speaking of the Manila Golf Club, socialite painter Ma. Victoria Rufino said it was the haughtiness of the waiter rather than her alleged infraction of the dress code that prompted her powerful husband, Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura, to rise up to her defense and write a letter-protest to the club management.

Rufino said the Gov asked her to wait a while when she came to pick him up at the club verandah about 7 p.m. on Nov. 4, a Sunday.

As was customary, the Gov asked her to get herself a drink while Buenaventura and Mike Celdran, who both share the same umbrella girl, were wrapping up talks.

To make a long story short, the waiter in question sniffed at the socialite and told her face that she could not be served as she was clad inappropriately. Rufino was then wearing a spaghetti-strapped shirt, an infraction of the T-shirt-with-collar policy of the club.

COCKTALES/ B8

Banks asked to prepare cover for Ramcar loans

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has ordered the 19 creditors of Ramcar Inc. to declare their P7.9-billion exposure in the battery-maker as "substandard" or non-performing as soon as the company starts defaulting even on the interest portion of its loans.

The central bank may already require the banks with exposure to Ramcar to provide a 25-percent provision for probable losses since the battery-maker's loans can be classified as substandard.

The BSP defines a substandard loan as involving "substantial and unreasonable degree of risk" to the bank. It could be secured, which is slightly better and would require a provision of as low as 6 percent, or worse, unsecured and would require a provision of 25 percent.

The BSP had already sent examiners to closely monitor the Ramcar loans owed to at least 19 locally operating banks, among them Bank of the Philippine Islands, Equitable PCI Bank, Citibank and Land Bank of the Philippines.

"We are checking Ramcar's request for a suspension of payments and how it would affect the loan. We also want to see how much of the loans are clean and how much are secured," a ranking BSP official said.

The central bank, the official said, also wanted to get a clearer picture of the impact of the loans, once declared as non-performing, on the commercial banking system.

The Bangko Sentral's concern followed the continued increase in the bad loans ratio of the banking industry, which had soared to 18.03 percent of total loans in August. This eased slightly to 17.92 percent in September mainly because of higher interbank borrowings.

Ramcar had reportedly presented a new restructuring program to its creditors involving a 10-year repay-

BANKS/ B7

Petrochem firms urge gov't to curb technical smuggling

THE LOCAL petrochemical industry has joined the growing list of distressed local industries reeling from the adverse effects of unabated smuggling.

The Association of Petrochemical Manufacturers of the Philippines (APMP), a grouping of companies producing plastic resins such as polyethylene, polypropylene, polyvinyl chloride, and polystyrene, stressed the need for the government to clamp down hard on technical smuggling, particularly those done using customs bonded warehouses (CBWs).

APMP spokesperson Wilfredo Paras said these CBWs are allowed by law to import raw and semi-processed materials duty- and tax-free to benefit legitimate manufacturers engaged in exporting at least 70 percent of their output. However, he said some unscrupulous CBW operators have been importing plastic resins tax- and duty-free, but instead of being processed into plastic goods for export, are sold as is in the local market.

Imports through these CBWs have increased dramatically this year despite the overall decline of exports, accounting for a 41-percent increase over the previous year, Paras added.

He said that among the measures proposed by the APMP are the pre-shipment inspections of resins to be brought in at zero to 3-percent duty and a "no-objection" letter from the BOI to be secured for items being brought in at zero to 3-percent tariff.

The industry has invested almost P50 billion over the last four years and generated about P250 million in annual taxes for the local and national governments.

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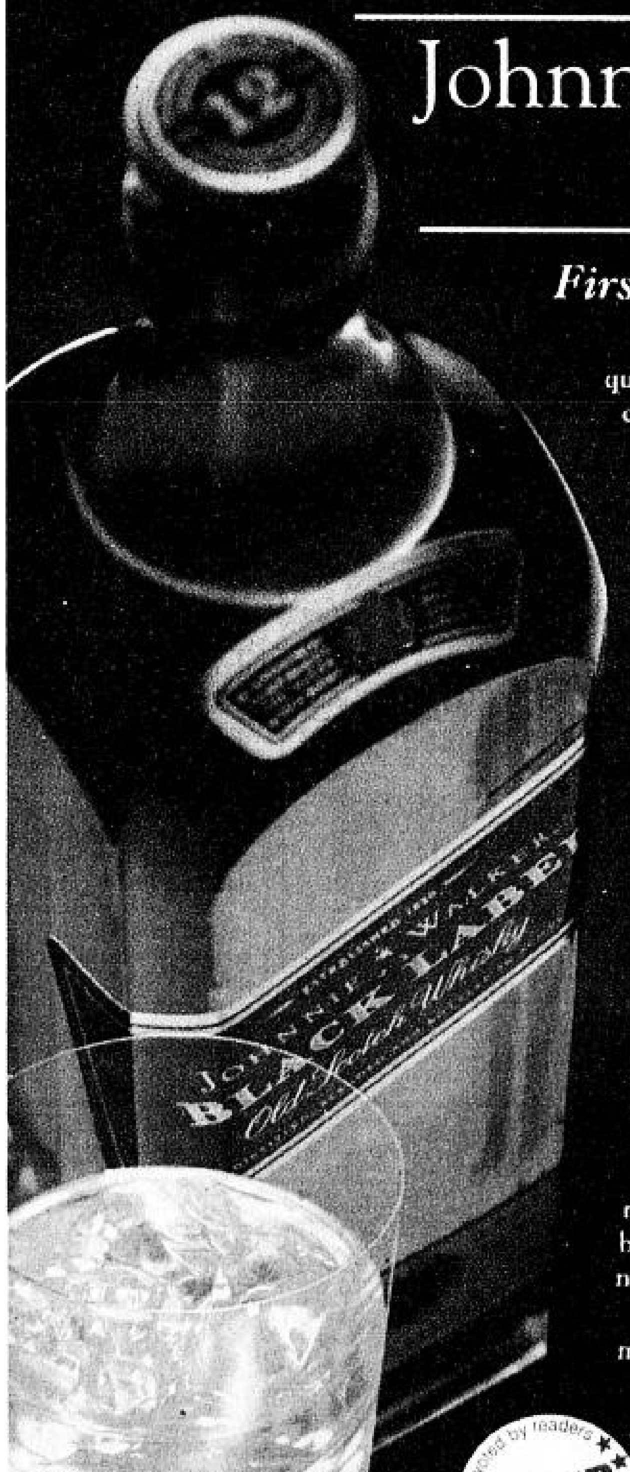
Where there's plurality among brands, a hierarchy among them inevitably follows. And thus emerged the title of 'SuperBrand' - a distinction conferred to a brand that has achieved the highest, unassailable reputation among consumers for its superior quality, rich heritage and global breadth among the multitude of brands.

For the third year running, Johnnie Walker has been awarded 'SuperBrand' status in a recent Asian survey commissioned by Reader's Digest Asia and conducted by research company Taylor Nelson Sofres. The annual survey, which is based on product quality, value, image, trustworthiness and satisfaction from the viewpoint of consumers, named Johnnie Walker 'SuperBrands Platinum' and 'SuperBrands Gold' winner in the Philippines and Asia.

Johnnie Walker's platinum citation was made even more distinct by the fact that it is the only platinum winner in the Philippines in the scotch whisky category, an indisputable proof that it is the Filipinos' choice of premium Scotch whisky - a feat firmly hinged on its reputation and consistent quality in the eyes of consumers as it has become a favorite brand they believe and trust.

Johnnie Walker marketing manager Glenn Manlapaz joins International Distillers Philippines (IDP) managing director Nik Witcombe in a celebratory toast to Johnnie Walker's SuperBrand Platinum distinction.

Johnnie Walker's SuperBrand Grand Slam Feat



First Steps

What sets Johnnie Walker apart fom other whiskies is the legacy of quality, which up to this very day is found in every bottle. Its famous blend can be traced back in 1820 where John Walker, in his small shop served and blended tea and later on decided to apply his skills to the blending of single malt whiskies.

John's passion to create the best whisky was later on encapsulated in a pronounced mission by his grandson Alexander, *"To make our whisky of such quality that nothing shall come before it."*

Great Strides

The Johnnie Walker identity has its roots in Kilmarnock, Scotland in 1867, when Alexander created the brand's iconic, distinctive attributes shared by no other whisky: a square bottle, a slanted label and the "J. Walker" signature. It was in 1909 when his sons, George and Alexander Walker commissioned cartoonist Tom Browne to create the Striding Man icon, which came to symbolize the brand long before other companies concluded that archetypes helped consumers identify with their brands. The Striding Man was in fact the metaphorical representation of Johnnie Walker's adherence to continuous progress and an impetuous of its entry and popularity in the global market. All these features communicate and evoke the brand's powerful character.

Taking the Lead

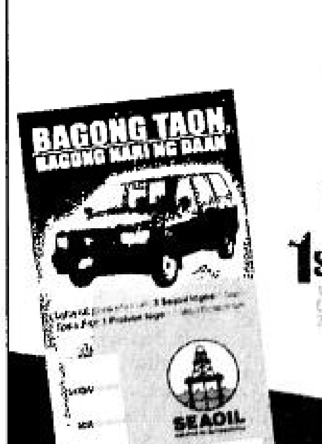
The power of Johnnie Walker's identity has elevated to one of the world's most recognizable brands. Consumers around the world perceive the brand to be of quality, value, trustworthy, strong in image and understanding of their needs - brand values ingrained in every bottle of Johnnie Walker.

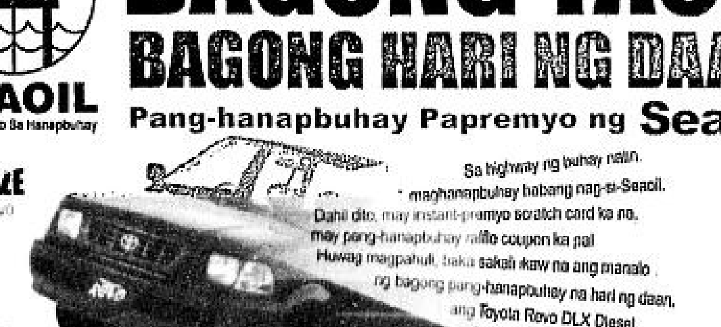
Johnnie Walker is the world's number one Scotch whisky with over 120 million bottles sold yearly in more than 200 countries. The heritage in which every bottle of Johnnie Walker Scotch whisky bespeaks of is the legacy of inspiration and creativity. This has led to the consolidation of Johnnie Walker as an undisputed SuperBrand.

voted by readers SUPER BRAND Reader's Digest Philippines

JOHNNIE WALKER

Drink moderately





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APFMC investing ₱613M to produce, export fertilizer

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ASIA Pacific Fertilizer Manufacturing Corp. (APFMC) will invest P613 million in a fertilizer manufacturing business at the Leyte Industrial Development Estate. The project will take over the idle capacity of Philippine Phosphate Fertilizer Corp.

The wholly-owned Filipino company has been granted incentives by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority including tax breaks and duty-free importation of capital equipment.

APFMC's project pushed up Peza's investment tally to P29.5 billion from January to October this year, down 56.84 percent from P68.3 billion during the same period last year.

The project will produce fertilizer products, including gypsum, for export to various Asian countries. The company expects to generate $65.731 million in annual export earnings and 100 new jobs.

The company will operate the idle facilities of Philphos representing roughly 50 percent of the fertilizer firm's production capacity.

Philphos currently operates on a 180-hectare complex inside the LIDE special economic zone in Isabel, Leyte, which boasts of cheap and abundant energy supply (it is adjacent to Tongonan Geothermal Power Plant), natural deep harbor and strategic location in central Philippines.

The government sold its 45-percent stake in Philphos last year to Delphi Holdings of businessman Jose Ch. Alvarez. Another 5-percent stake was sold to small stockholders a few months ago.

The Republic of Nauru has retained its 50-percent interest in the company.

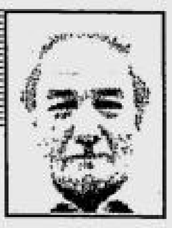
The company has been struggling to survive in view of the debilitating impacts of the peso depreciation that have driven raw material costs to new heights. The local and high interest rates and the global glut in fertilizer have made it impossible to raise domestic and export prices despite the rising cost of operations.

11TH PHILCONSTRUCT OPENING CEREMONY

Justo Manalo (extreme left), president of the Philippine Constructor's Association, welcomes guests and participants of the 11th Philconstruct during the opening rites of the exhibit last week at the World Trade Center. Joining Manalo are (from left) Morton Holbrook, counselor for economic affairs of the US Embassy; George Rueffner, counselor for commercial attaché of the US Embassy; Bernhard Knetz, APCEOS executive director; Alice Tiongson, president of Women in Construction; and Jacqueline Lasne, commercial attaché of the French embassy.

Who's afraid of China at WTO?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES



Honesto C. General

THERE are those, mostly local Communists masquerading as militants and activists, who insist that the Philippines should pull out of the World Trade Organization. These misguided creatures should look into China's Long March to full membership in that trade body.

China knocked on the WTO's door for 15 long years. The initial application bogged down because China wanted to be treated as a developing country. Why? Because WTO rules are tilted heavily in favor of developing countries like the Philippines. (Local commies have chosen to ignore this point.) But a country like China, claiming to be a world power, could not be taken in as developing country, even if many parts of China are hopelessly rural. Later, the United States used China's terrible human rights record as the excuse for blocking the application. The final hurdle was the treatment of new branch offices of foreign (actually American) insurance companies with long presence in China. Apparently, this last problem was solved and the application has been finally approved.

Why did China persevere for 15 years? Because, there are a lot of goodies in the WTO. In fact, while its application was pending approval, China wangled Most Favored Nation (MFN) status from President Bill Clinton. This meant that entry of Chinese goods into the US was subject to the same duties enjoyed by the most favored nation that was exporting to America. The MFN clause is the core of the global trade administered by the WTO. (Local commies again have chosen to ignore this most important clause.)

If the Philippines pulls out of the WTO, it loses its MFN status. This means we will have to negotiate tariff duties with every country we want to continue doing business with. As a non-member, we surely will not enjoy the low tariffs applied to our competitors remaining in the WTO. We may be able to wangle MFN treatment from the American government, but we cannot be sure of this.

In short, resigning from the WTO is economic suicide since our exports will then be priced clear out of the market. Any Filipino who advocates pulling out of the WTO should have his head examined.

But, how do we compete with China with its cheap labor? When China was enjoying MFN status from the US, it was thought then that Philippine exports would suffer. But judging from my clients in the export business, the Philippines did fine.

Perhaps, the best way is to look at China, not as a competitor, but as a market for our exports. To qualify for membership, China had to lower import tariffs and subsidies to state-owned enterprises. China is open to us as we are open to China. While we can expect Chinese goods to come into the country, we should be able to sell to China our coconut oil, bananas, pineapples and mangos. China may need our engineers, architects and other professionals. Besides, we have a highly competitive Chinese business community. I am sure the Gokongweis, the Yuchengcos and the Tans are already gearing up to make their fortune in the Chinese trade. The WTO is a two-way street.

When the Spaniards came in the 16th century, the Chinese were already trading in the islands. During the 250 years of the Galleon trade between the Philippines and Mexico, Filipinos and Spaniards got rich trading in Chinese goods. Trading with the Chinese is old hat.

If we are afraid of China in the WTO, what do we do when Russia's application is also approved? The main thrust of Russian economic policy is to enter the WTO by next year. The way American-Russian relations are warming up, Russia should make it.

Instead of being scared, we should learn the rules of the global trading game and play the game hard. Our lives depend on it. While the WTO rules are tilted in favor of developing countries like the Philippines, the rules will not work for us unless we work hard. And our best chance for survival is inside the WTO, not outside.

Napocor gets authority to apply unbundled rates

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission recently granted National Power Corp. a provisional authority to implement its unbundled rates, a Napocor official said.

Edgardo Orencio, manager of Napocor's tariff design and administration division, said the provisional authority allowed the power firm to implement the new rates while the ERC was evaluating Napocor's proposed rates.

The unbundling or breaking up into several detailed classifications of Napocor's power rates was required under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

Section 36 of the law stated that (Napocor's rates) should be unbundled and broken up into transmission and generation rates. The rates, it said, should reflect the detailed costs of providing services.

However, he said that Napocor has yet to submit a report on the adequacy of its metering equipment, a condition for the implementation of the unbundled rates.

"The unbundled rates system includes a feature that should show the time of use. This means we have to install electronic meters that will measure how long the customers used electricity," he added.

Orencio said the state firm has to comply with this requirement "as soon as possible."

The power reform law has a corresponding requirement for distribution utilities to unbundle their rates.

In a related matter, Energy Secretary Vicente Perez Jr. said in a radio interview last Saturday that the law's implementing rules have already been submitted to Congress last week for approval.

Once approved, the implementing rules would allow prospective investors in the local electric power industry to determine their prospects.

Perez said a number of local and international investors have expressed serious interest in the privatization of Napocor.

The National Transmission Corp. will likely be the first on the auction block by early next year, after which Napocor's power plants will be offered for sale.

Pag-IBIG expects to post ₱6B in profit

By Elena R. Torrijos

HOME Mutual Development Fund or Pag-IBIG expects to make P6.3 billion in net income this year on the back of higher returns on investments.

In an interview, Pag-IBIG senior vice president Emma Linda Faria said the state agency has already made P5 billion as of September this year.

However, 70 percent of the profit will be declared as dividend to be remitted to the national government, which needs the money given a projected P145-billion budget deficit for the year.

Faria said Pag-IBIG was considering issuing bonds yearly in order to fund its housing programs and to provide an array of savings instruments to members, especially those who will "graduate" from the program after contributing for 20 years.

She said the bonds to be issued could amount to P2 billion yearly and would likely have the same features as the P2 billion worth of bonds it launched last month. These bonds will mature in five years and one day, and carry a fixed interest rate of 8 percent per year payable semi-annually.

Another state-owned company, the Home Guaranty Corp., has agreed to provide a cash guaranty covering the principal and interest of the bonds.

Pag-IBIG had wanted to issue P8 billion in bonds this year but decided to pare down its borrowings given the low demand for housing this year.

Pag-IBIG executive vice president Romero Federico Quimbo said that Pag-IBIG was committed to set aside P10 billion in housing loans for its 4.78 million members nationwide.

Pag-IBIG currently has P123 billion in assets, of which P65 billion is in the form of loans for housing programs. Pag-IBIG also has P20 billion in multi-purpose loans and P35 billion in investment in government securities.

Based on a five-year projection by HDMF, its cash flow could support its debt service requirement for existing debts as well as the interest payment on the proposed bond issue.

For this year, Pag-IBIG projects an annual cash inflow of P59.98 billion, of which 51 percent of P30.4 billion will come from members' contributions and repayment of loans.

Pag-IBIG bonds are eligible as capital and reserve investment of insurance companies. They are acceptable collateral for developers' loan from the home mortgage fund.

Bondholders are entitled to participate in a semi-annual raffle draw of house and lot packages. The bondholders will be assigned one raffle number for every bond with a denomination of P5,000.

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Canyonwoods	-	330,000
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Forest Hills "B"	-	230,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	300,000
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Manila Golf (Individual)	Please Call	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,700,000	Please Call
Manila Southwoods "A"	-	700,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	700,000	750,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
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Mt. Malarayat	-	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200,000	250,000
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Orchard Golf Club "C"	350,000	500,000
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Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	130,000
Quezon City Sports Club	200,000	240,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	-	550,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	150,000
Sta. Elena "A"	-	1,700,000
Sta. Elena "B"	-	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	400,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	190,000
Tagaytay Country Club	-	390,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	750,000
Tagaytay Midlands	-	730,000
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Valley Golf	-	240,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	-	6,700,000

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Manila Southwoods	40,000	Tagaytay Mid.	35,000
Makati Sports "A"	25,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	300,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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CELEBRITY CLUB	200,000	CAPITOL HILLS	120,000
EAGLERIDGE "B"	500,000	CC AT TAGAYTAY	Call now
MANILA POLO CLUB	2,800,000	FOREST HILLS "A"	220,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	730,000	MAKATI SPORTS "A"	Call now
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	800,000	MANILA GOLF (INDIV)	11,000,000
ORCHARD "C"	550,000	MANILA POLO	2,500,000
RIVIERA GCC "A" / "B"	Call now	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	Call now
ROCKWELL CLUB	565,000	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	750,000
STA. ELENA "A"	1,700,000	ORCHARD "A"	Call now
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	Call now	RIVIERA "A"	Call now
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	750,000	STA. ELENA "B"	Call now
VALLEY GOLF	260,000	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	Call now
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MANILA GOLF	400,000	WACK WACK	90,000

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Celebrity Sports	195,000	-
Club Filipino	250,000	-
The Country Club	4,500,000	-
Eagleridge-B	400,000	-
Eastridge	200,000	-
Filipinas Golf	350,000	-
Fontana C	130,000	-
Fontana D	80,000	-
Forest Hills A	250,000	230,000
Forest Hills B	-	240,000
Forest Hills C	400,000	-
Makati Sports	320,000	-
Manila Golf	-	12,000,000
Manila Polo	2,700,000	2,300,000
Manila Southwoods A	700,000	Pls. Cal
Mt. Malarayat	-	330,000
Mimosa A	200,000	-
Orchard	250,000	Pls. Cal
Riviera	200,000	-
Sherwood	150,000	-
Sta. Elena	Pls.Call	1,500,000
Subic Golf	310,000	-
Tagaytay CC	390,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	700,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	600,000
Tivoli Royale	150,000	-
Valle Verde A	180,000	160,000
Valle Verde C	-	300,000
Wack-wack	6,800,000	-

Playing Rights available lessor

Alabang	50,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Eagleridge	15,000	Tagaytay Midlands	45,000
~~Orchard~~	10,000	Tagaytay Highlands	45,000
Manila Southwoods	40,000	Wack-wack	90,000

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Manila Golf (Indv.)	12.5M
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Manila Polo	2.7M
Manila Southwoods "A"	650,000
Makati Sports "A"/B	250,000/300,000
Mimosa Ind./Corp.	200/450,000
Mt. Malarayat "A"/C	350,000/645,000
Orchard "A"/B/C	230/330/350
Rockwell Club	420,000
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Sta. Elena A	1,600,000
The Country Club	Please call
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000
Tagaytay Club	360,000
Tagaytay Golf	750,000
Valle Verde CC	175,000
Valley Golf	240,000
Wack Wack	5,850,000

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Calatagan A/B	90,000/90,000
Canlubang Golf	600,000
Canyon Woods	200,000
Capitol Hills	110,000
Celebrity	190,000
Eagle Ridge A/B/C	350,000/400/480
Forest Hills "A"/B/C	230/230/270
Manila Golf (Indv.)	12M
Manila Golf (Corp.)	14M
Manila Polo	2.5M
Manila Southwoods "B"	750,000
Mimosa Ind./Corp.	150,000/Please call
Mt. Malarayat "A"/C	350,000/600,000
Orchard A/B/C	200,000/240/350
Sta. Elena A	1,600,000
Subic Yacth Ind. & Corp.	180,000/400,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000
Tagaytay Highland Golf	750,000
Valle Verde CC "C"	320,000
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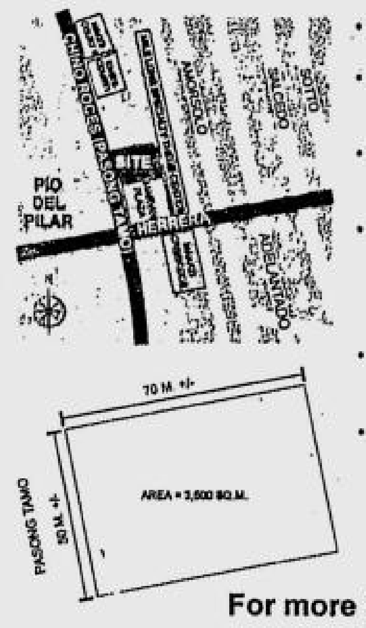

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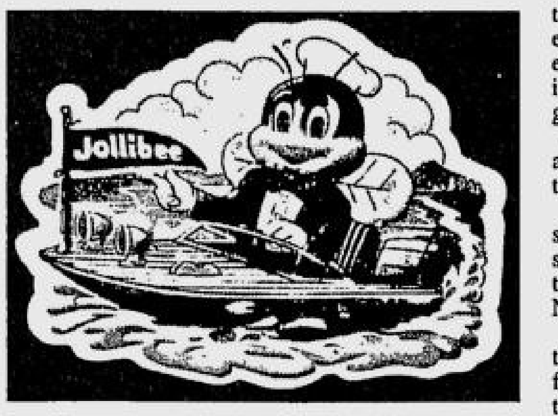
JFC to go slow on store expansion in 2002

By Doris C. Dumlao

FAST FOOD giant Jollibee Foods Corp. said it was planning to go slow on its store expansion next year in view of the uncertainties brought about by the global economic slowdown in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.



In an analysts briefing last week, JFC chief finance officer Miguel Jose Navarette said the company would not be spending in 2002 as much as it did this year in opening new quick-service restaurants.

The JFC group recently hit the 800-store mark—406 stores of its flagship Jollibee brand, 196 Greenwich outlets, 182 Chowking stores, 21 Delifrance and 29 offshore Jollibee and Chowking stores.

As of November this year, Navarette said JFC has so far opened 78 new stores, more than double the 34 opened during the same period last year.

Navarette said JFC has yet to finalize its business plan for next year but noted that there were opportunities this year that would not be there next year.

With the volatile business environment, he said, store openings would likely be "much less than what we've done this year."

For this year, Navarette said there were two factors that worked well in JFC's favor prompting an aggressive store expansion.

For instance, he said the senatorial elections early this year as well as the El Niño dry spell presented unique opportunities for robust consumer spending.

"This time we don't see them coming into play. The recovery of the US is being pushed back. Our neighboring countries are in recession. Taiwan and Singapore are in recession, although we are less affected because our economy is less export-dependent," he explained.

Navarette also said the company was reevaluating its offshore expansion, particularly in the US to factor in the global slowdown.

JFC currently operates eight restaurants in the US.

"There is a slowdown so we're evaluating some of the opportunities that we have," Navarette said.

JFC earlier identified two locations in the US for further expansion but this, he said, might have to be reevaluated.

The central commissary or integrated production facility that JFC was putting up has also been delayed. Navarette was, however, quick to add that the delay was due to technical obstacles and had nothing to do with the company's cautious stance for 2002.

Despite the difficult economic environment, JFC's net earnings are still seen to grow by 8-10 percent this year. In the third quarter, its earnings grew by 7.3 percent as the expansion of its store network boosted revenues. Although the fall of the peso against the dollar has been tempered during the period, JFC, like other businesses, was affected by the rising cost of production.

For the first nine months of the year, JFC's net income stood at P647.6 million, 6.8 percent higher than the level in the same period last year.

Bangko Sentral urges banks to lower rates

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is urging banks operating in the country to bring their lending rates closer to the central bank's policy rates to encourage business and individual borrowings.

"The central bank has reduced its policy rates steadily in the past few months bringing down the rates in their lowest levels since 1995. We hope the banks would take the rates cut into consideration in pricing their loans," said BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr.

The BSP's call came at a time when the commercial banking system's outstanding loans showed a contraction for the second straight month in September to P1.398 trillion. This was 0.6 percent lower than the previous month's P1.406 trillion.

Despite the possibility that the banks' lending activity might pick up, he said the growth in domestic liquidity or M3, which measures the amount money supply, would be lower than the revised BSP target of 13 percent this year.

"We may end up with a lower than 13-percent growth in domestic liquidity but that is because the economic growth assumption we used when we revised the M3 target was on the higher end to provide a buffer for the system," said the central bank official.

He said that since economic growth was slower, demand for money was also lower. "Thus, growth in domestic liquidity was also much less."

As of last week, even the lowest lending rates offered by commercial banks to prime clients were still higher than the 91-day treasury bill yield, usually used by banks as basis in pricing their loans.

The lowest rates range from 11 percent to 11.3 percent. These were offered by the Bank of the Philippine Islands, Development Bank of the Phils. and Land Bank of the Phils. The highest rates ranging from 15.5 percent to 16.25 percent were offered by Traders Royal Bank, East West Bank, United Overseas Bank, Global Bank and ING Bank.

The lending activities of the banks slowed down as the biggest borrower, the manufacturing sector, posted a 1.8-percent decline in borrowings as of August.

The BSP blamed the decline in the borrowing activity of the manufacturing sector to a 78.6-percent decline in its average capacity utilization which allowed companies to produce even without a need for additional bank financing.

The central bank is hoping that the local banking sector could manage to post a 3-percent growth in credits by yearend from an earlier target of a 10-percent growth in loans.

The manufacturing sector accounts for 27.9 percent of the total loan portfolio of banks followed by financial institutions, real estate and business services with 25.6 percent. Bank loans of the financial sector also registered a 5.9-percent drop in September.

The wholesale and retail sector cornered the third biggest chunk with 14.5 percent. As of September, the sector posted a dismal growth in loans of only 2.1 percent from a growth of 19.8 percent a month ago.

The utilities group posted a loan growth of 14.6 percent but with only a 5.1-percent share of the pie.

The community, social and personal services sector registered the biggest growth of 17 percent in borrowings but it accounts for only 12.2 percent of the total outstanding loans. The agriculture, fishing and forestry posted a growth of 1.9 percent from a contraction in the previous month.

The mining and quarrying; construction; transportation, storage and communication sectors also registered decline in loans of 6.6 percent, 10.6 percent and 12 percent, respectively.

BPI to acquire receivables of selected big companies

By Elena R. Torrijos

PUBLICLY listed Bank of the Philippine Islands, the country's second largest bank, plans to acquire the consumer loan portfolios of large companies in the Philippines amounting to hundreds of millions of pesos in order to boost its lending activities and increase revenue.

In an interview, BPI president Xavier Loinaz said that the bank was in talks with certain "very big companies" to buy their receivables. These are mainly loans to employees, including salary, housing and car loans, totaling about P300 million to P400 million per company.

Loinaz said these loan portfolios were being "religiously paid" but companies were inclined to dispose of these loans to be able to better focus on core competencies.

He said that the purchase, if ever, would be basically based on the par value of the loans although, in some cases, pricing would have to be enhanced because certain companies were subsidizing the interest rates charged on employees.

BPI's total loan portfolio has been contracting gradually since the onset of the Asian financial crisis in 1997. As of September this year, its consolidated net loans contracted by 5.8 percent to P168.6 billion from P178.9 billion in end-December, reflecting the slowdown in the economy.

For the first nine months of the year, BPI, owned by the Ayala family, posted a net income of P4.6 billion or 72 percent over last year's P2.7 billion, making it the most profitable bank in the country.

BPI's thrift banking arm, BPI Family Bank, recently received the go-signal from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to acquire DBS Bank Philippines from the Development Bank of Singapore for P1.6 billion.

DBS, the parent company, itself has a 20-percent stake in BPI.

Loinaz said the closing documents should be signed and actual payment would be made by tomorrow.

He does not see DBS Bank, which has 20 branches, contributing any significant revenue to BPI while integration costs will likely be very minimal.

BPI's total resources as of end-September amounted to P397.3 billion while deposits stood at P313.9 billion or 6.1 percent more than the end of last year.

Banks asked to prepare . . .

(From page B5)

ment period for its P7.9-billion obligations, a moratorium on principal payments, and a reduction in interest on the loans.

The company has also asked its creditors to commission an accredited central bank auditor to appraise its real estate assets. The move is aimed at having a more accurate valuation in preparation for a payment-in-kind or dacion en pago arrangement.

From an earlier five-year repayment plan, sources said Ramcar had appealed to its 19 lenders to stretch the restructuring period to 10 years aside from a moratorium on principal payments for several years and a reduction in interest charges.

Ramcar, controlled by the Agustines family, specializes in vehicle battery production. It has investments in the Metro Rail Transit 3 project and in the local franchise of Kentucky Fried Chicken and Mister Donut.

While it has been able to pay at least the interest on the loans, thus making it performing, industry sources said its financial hemorrhage might prompt it to stop paying the interest altogether in the coming months.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura earlier said the Ramcar loan was still performing but it might default in the next three months.

A loan becomes non-performing if neither the interest nor the principal had been paid for three straight months from its due date. A loan is considered past due if it is unpaid after a month.

So far, since the news of its impending default last month, Ramcar has paid about P5 billion in interest to its creditors. Of the P7.9 billion in outstanding loans of the battery maker, P6.1 billion is clean or without collateral and only P1.8 billion is secured.

BPI is Ramcar's biggest creditor with an exposure of P2.2 billion followed by Land Bank with P1 billion. Equitable PCI and Citibank have P600 million and P500 million.

Ramcar's other creditors include Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Union Bank, and United Coconut Planters Bank.

Buenaventura had warned that if Ramcar defaults on its loans, these could add some three-quarters-of-a-point to the industry's NPL ratio.

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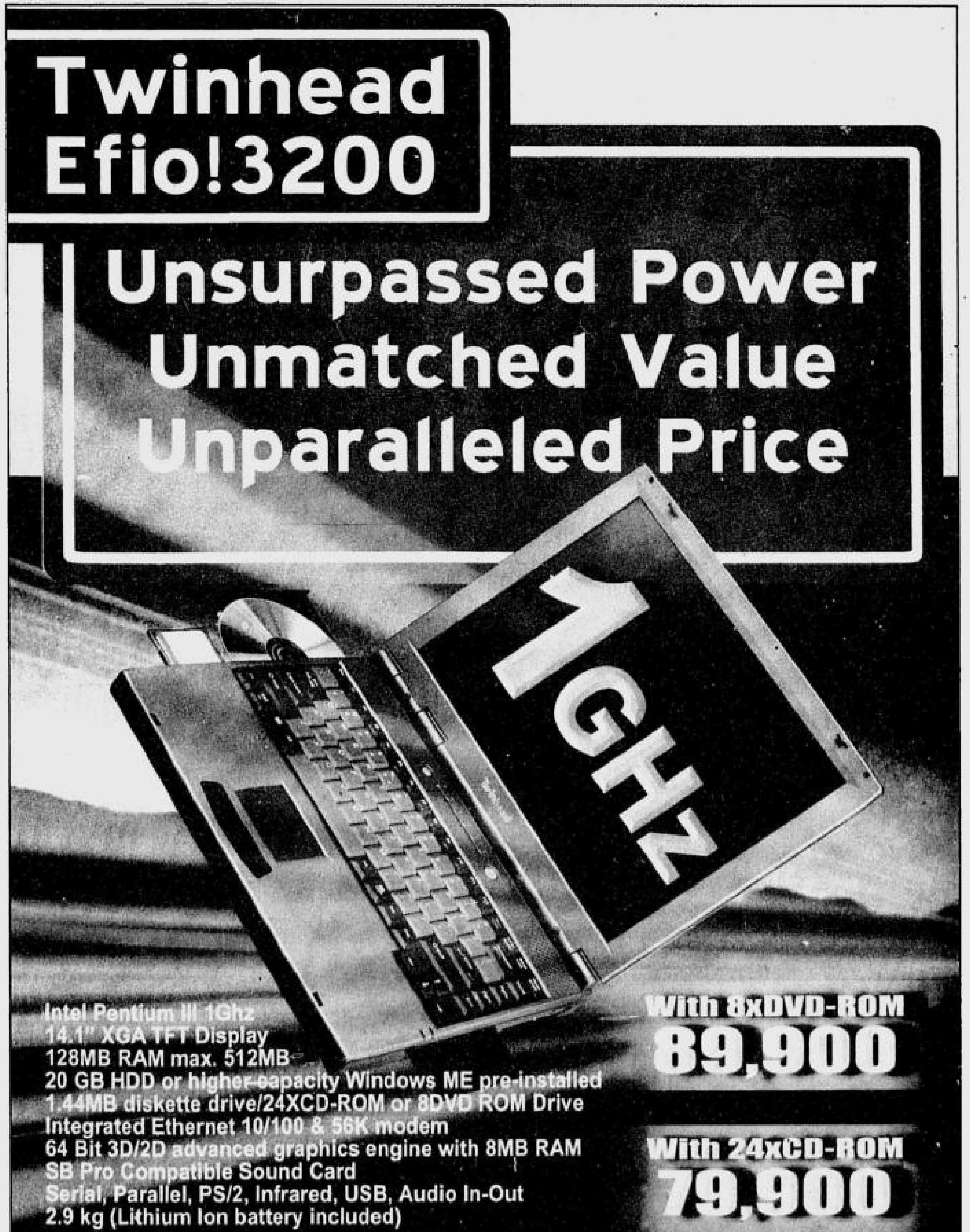

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iBank to open 6 more branches

INTERNATIONAL Exchange Bank (iBank) announced that it was set to open six more branches before yearend in line with its expansion program this year.

Antonio Moncupa, iBank executive vice president and treasurer, said that three branches were scheduled to open this month. These are the iBank branches in Taft Avenue, Retiro and Malinta. The Tutuban, Intramuros and Annapolis (Greenhills) branches are scheduled to open in December.

Moncupa said the expansion was timed with the Christmas season during which a significant increase in banking transactions was expected. It is also a part of iBank's initiatives to provide its customers with additional service delivery channels.

He pointed out that the additional branches were located in areas where there were high medium-scale enterprise activities.

Moncupa also said the opening of additional branches would be followed by the introduction of new products that would provide its customers with optimum benefits for their placements. This will enable depositors to maximize the earning potentials of their liquid assets, he said.

LBP profit hits ₱1.1B

LAND Bank of the Philippines registered a net income of P1.1 billion as of Sept. 30 this year. This was 3.7 times more than the P300 million attained in the same period last year.

LandBank president and CEO Gary Teves said this was triggered by the 26.9-percent increase in gross revenues from P11.8 billion last year to P14.9 billion this year. This was in turn boosted by higher income on investments that grew by 62 percent to P5.2 billion.

The growth in investment income was brought about by the increase in the bank's average net investment portfolio by 21.3 percent to P65.3 billion for January to September this year.

The bank's total assets improved by 3 percent to P215.7 billion from last year's P208.6 billion. This was driven by the 5.1-percent growth in total deposits to P159.3 billion from the P151.5 billion attained in 2001.

The bank's NPL rate stood at 25.1 percent in September 2001. Landbank also continued to extend its support to its three priority sectors as part of its thrust of reinvigorating the countryside. As of Sept. 30, 2001, outstanding loans amounted to P13 billion for farmers and fishermen; P13.4 billion for small and medium enterprises and 6.4 billion for mass housing.

Meanwhile, the People's Credit and Finance Corp., the bank's lead agency in microfinance, has assisted a total of 393,000 poor women borrowers. This is over 100 percent of the original target outreach of 391,295 beneficiaries.

Of the P6.4 billion extended to mass housing, P3.1 billion went to private developers, P192 million for LGU development loans and P3.1 billion for individual housing loans.

ALLEGED UNDERVALUATION

BoC probes cement importers

THE BUREAU of Customs (BoC) has moved to investigate a number of cement importers who may have defrauded the government of millions in pesos in customs duties by under-declaring the value of the cement that they are bringing into the country.

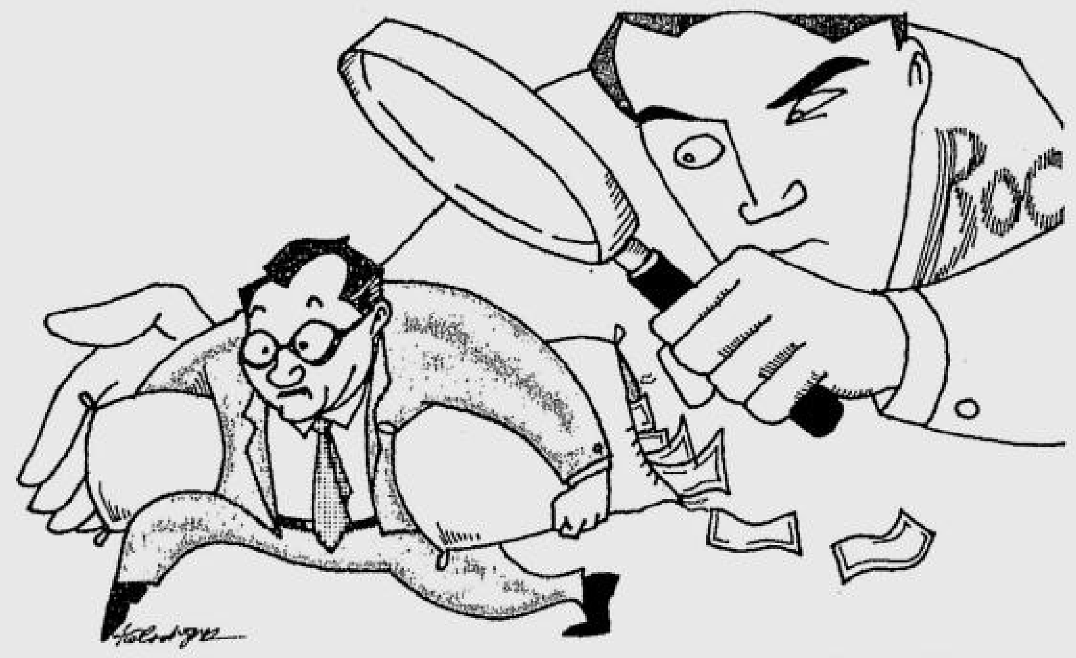
Customs Deputy Commissioner George Jereos ordered the recall of several import entries submitted by at least three cement importers to the BoC for a closer "re-assessment."

Jereos said the cement import prices declared by these importers in certain points of entry seemed to be undervalued, raising speculations that they might be trying to avoid paying the right amount of taxes to the government.

In their official commercial invoices, Iloilo City Hardware Inc., V&C Rising and Stanphil Philippines Inc. declared the price of the cement they brought in from Indonesia this year at a range of $21 to $24 per metric ton (MT) C&F (cost and freight). (C&F refers to the prices or cost of the commodity being brought in plus shipping costs).

The $21-$24 price range declared by the three importers is considerably lower than the average $42 per MT C&F declared by other importers of Indonesian cement. Moreover, official figures from the Commercial Trade Attaché of Indonesia show that the prevailing export price of Indonesian cement this year was $26 per MT FOB (freight on board), or within the range of $39-$43 per MT C&F, if shipping costs are included.

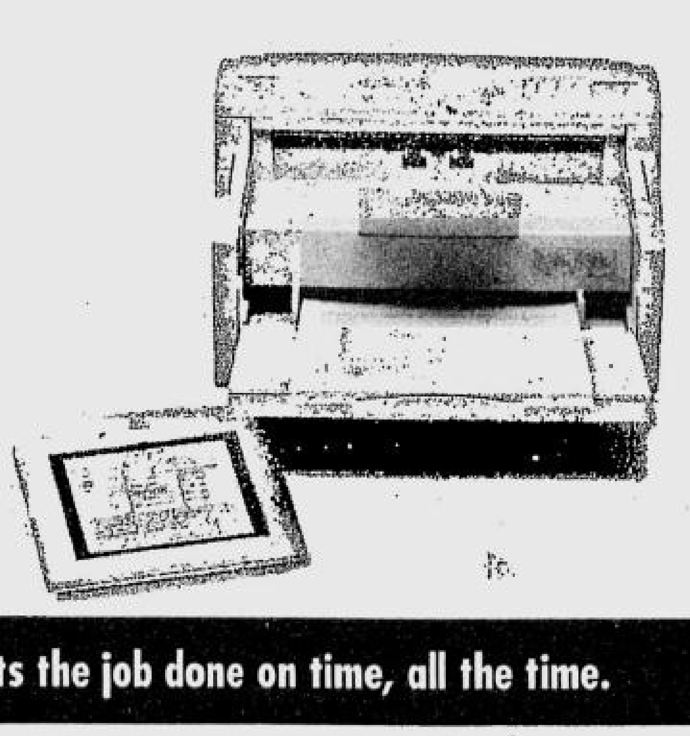
It was the Confederation of Homeowners Association for Reforms in Governance and Environment (CHARGE) and the Consumers Union of the Philippines that blew the whistle on the importers' suspected undervaluation. In a press statement issued last Nov. 7, CHARGE president Jesus Arranza urged the government "to charge these unscrupulous importers who undervalued their imports in order to reduce their tax payment. This way the government can collect the rightful taxes and duties."



Arranza also recalled that several importers had testified under oath before the House committee on trade and industry that the landed cost of the cement they have been importing was P110 per bag. Actual import entries filed with the BoC however show that some importers have been declaring a landed cost of as low as P52 per bag, or less than half the P110-level they cited in their testimony at the House of Representatives.

For his part, Customs Commissioner Titus Villanueva vowed to intensify the BoC's ongoing efforts to crack down on smugglers. He said the bureau will continue taking the necessary steps to minimize incidents of technical and outright smuggling, not only of cement, but also of other imported products as well.

Earlier, Villanueva was commended by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo herself for exceeding the BoC's collection target for January to May this year despite the lower volume of imports during the said period.



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GOINGS-ON

ACNielsen's homepanel service

ACNIELSEN Philippines recently launched its Homepanel service that would measure fast-moving consumer goods and record all purchase patterns.

In a press conference, ACNielsen managing director for Southeast Asia, Bienvenido Niles, said this non-scanning panel service would track down demographically representative households to diagnose their purchase behavior and their changing dynamics over time.

"It will provide an in-depth understanding of the consumer factors behind a brand's performance in the retail trade, such as penetration, buying rates, loyalty levels, consumer demographics and brand switching," he said.

Among ACNielsen's Homepanel works include a documentation of what it noted as the growing importance of trade although *sari-sari* stores are still a big part of the Filipino consumer's daily purchase habits especially among the low-income group.

Mcann-Erickson bags awards

MCCANN-ERICKSON Philippines dominated the 2000 4As Agency of the Year Awards by garnering the Agency of the Year Award and three out of five category awards: Best in Management of Business, Best in Market Performance and Best in Industry Leadership and Community Service.

This is the third win for McCann after winning the top award in 1997 and 1998. The agency withdrew from the competition in 1999.

The 4As Agency of the Year Awards is a competition that recognizes outstanding advertising agencies in the country. The Agency of the Year Awards honors excellence in all areas of agency disciplines.

ISTIV holds national convention

FIVE small and medium businesses will showcase the successful implementation of their quality and productivity improvement strategies in the First ISTIV National Convention on Nov. 21, 8 a.m. at the Ichikawa Hall of the Occupational Safety and Health Center, Quezon City.

The convention was organized by the National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) in partnership with the Philippine Quality and Productivity Movement Inc.

With the theme "ISTIV: Big Lessons from small companies," the convention will recognize the significant contribution of the SMEs in the national quality and productivity improvement campaign. Beneficiary-firms will convene on this occasion to encourage others to adopt the technology in their respective organizations. It will secure multi-sectoral support by encouraging the participation of CEOs, executives from labor and employers groups, government officials, quality and productivity practitioners from the public and private sectors, the academe and media.

The convention will highlight presentations of the ISTIV Best Practices in such categories as quality and productivity results, innovation, people development, leadership and process management. It will also feature an expert's paper on benchmarking and exhibits showcasing milestones in the implementation of the program.

Ayala's Yahoo-type portal

AYALA Corp. is deploying portal technology to provide corporate users, its partners and suppliers a single point of access for information and applications. Users will gain access using a Web browser, and each user's opening screen will be customized to the employee's job and interests, according to company managing director and CIO Mark Anthony Javier.

"Applications will be broken down to independent Web-enabled modules. A user's IWMs will be based on the user's role," explained Javier.

"For example, an accountant's portal page may include a link to a specific general ledger or account receivable functions. In addition, all users will have access to inbox, calendar, and certain human resource-related information such as leaves, loans and salary information.

Portal technology, Javier said, makes the difference. "It's only recently that the power of Internet portals has been made available for corporate portals. In fact, when we first implemented SAP's enterprise software, this technology wasn't available from SAP."

Cocktales

(From page B5)

Rather than pick up a fight, the power couple chose to leave, although in a huff. The talk in the club is that the waiters and the union are on rude-offensive because it is CBA time.

Still, one positive outcome of the incident is that it has sparked off a reexamination of apparently competing club policies banning collarless shirts among guest and members and yet, at the same time, allowing outside functions to be held in its premises where female guests come attired in micro miniskirts and in various states of undress.

Heard through the grapevine

VICTOR Sison's return as general manager of the Manila Hotel did not push through last week after the hotel's controlling shareholder, Emilio Yap, and Sison failed to agree on the compensation and benefits package.

Sison, who was vice president/director of the hotel during GSIS days, served as interim GM in 1992.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.-com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

IMF prepared to help fight terror financing

OTTAWA—The International Monetary Fund said Friday it was prepared to help countries fight money laundering and the financing of terrorism but would not be a global law enforcer.

The IMF said its executive board this week reaffirmed its willingness to help block terrorist financing and money laundering in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks.

"Recent events have prompted a reexamination at national and international levels of mechanisms for the promotion and enforcement of laws against both money laundering and the financing of terrorism. In these circumstances, the IMF too is reconsidering its contribution to these international efforts," according to a statement issued here as policymakers of the IMF and World Bank gathered for meetings here.

The statement said the IMF was already playing "a facilitating role" for countries on maintaining standards in the international financial system, but it could not be a global policeman.

"Directors reaffirmed that the IMF's primary efforts should be in assessing compliance with financial supervisory principles and providing corresponding technical assistance. They confirmed, in particular, that it would be inappropriate for the IMF to become involved in law enforcement issues."

The statement said IMF officials supported "expanding the Fund's involvement beyond anti-money laundering to efforts aimed at countering terrorism financing."

The IMF said it would assess compliance with procedures on illicit financial transactions in offshore financial centers as well as other countries, but that "these assessments should be done on a voluntary basis."

Globalization can't be turned back, says World Bank chief

OTTAWA—Globalization cannot be turned back but needs to be better managed so its benefits are felt around the world, World Bank president James Wolfensohn said on Friday.

Wolfensohn, speaking in an interview with Reuters and Reuters Television, also said the World Bank was prepared to resume lending to Argentina as soon as the troubled country could reach a deal with its creditors.

"I don't think anyone can turn back globalization, but Sept. 11 will cause a reappraisal on everybody's part of what globalization means," Wolfensohn said.

Wolfensohn's comments came as anti-capitalism protesters took to the streets of Ottawa to complain about policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Finance ministers and central bankers representing member-countries of the two lenders are meeting in Ottawa this weekend as finance officials from a group of 20 rich and poor countries.

A group of about 350 protesters smashed windows of a McDonald's restaurant on Friday, a favorite target of those opposed to globalization.

"The question is how are you going to manage globalization so that its benefits can go to more people," he said.

Since Sept. 11, Wolfensohn has underlined the importance of extending help to poor countries because of the link between poverty and the dissatisfaction that can breed terrorists.

The World Bank chief repeated his call for more funding for poor countries and also more generous agreements on trade by the richest countries. He has called for a doubling of official aid flows to around $100 billion a year to achieve the goal of halving poverty.

Wolfensohn gave verbal support to Argentina's latest bid to cope with its debt burden through a complicated debt swap deal, saying he was "hopeful" the country was on top of the situation. Argentina is desperately trying to cut the servicing cost on some of its $132-billion debt with the exchange.

"If all that happens, if it works out with the IMF we are quite ready to come in and continue our program," Wolfensohn said.

He noted that it was important that the Argentine government straightened out relations with the provinces and get the budget under control.

Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo, also in Ottawa for the meetings, said on Friday that Argentina was not defaulting on its debts, and that the United States was supportive of the plan to save his nation from bankruptcy.

The head of the Washington-lender said the Turkish economy had "a real chance" of turning the corner.

Believing the country deserved support of the international financial community because of its size and importance, Wolfensohn said he expected the IMF to come up with a decent program.

On Thursday night, the IMF head, Horst Koehler, said he would recommend a new loan for Turkey to bridge a $10-billion financing gap, and said the cash-strapped country's performance under its existing $19-billion program had been "very strong." *Reuters*

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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

CFA-MA founder remembered

THE COMMUNICATION Foundation for Asia-Media Apostolate (CFA-MA), now on its 41st year of existence, commemorated the 6th death anniversary of its founder, Fr. Cornelio Lagerwey, MSC, on August 15. The names CFA and Fr. Lagerwey has always been synonymous with one another because this Catholic media outfit would not have been built without the vision and tireless work of Fr. Cor of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

Fr. Lagerwey, a Dutch priest, started his apostolate in the Philippines in 1956 in Guimba, Nueva Ecija. It was from this small parish where he learned the power of media in evangelization. While preparing for Mass, Fr. Cor was struck by a man from another religious sect who was angered by his presence. He went on to say Mass in his bloodied chasuble. Little did he know that The Sentinel, a Catholic newspaper, carried his story, touched a cord in the hearts of the readers, and kept donations pouring his way. Before he left Nueva Ecija, a church to serve 80 villages and a seminary for young men were finally constructed.

With the realization of the power of media to reach people, he went on to his next self-imposed assignment, publishing the Philippine Catholic Digest, the maiden issue of which came out on August 1961. The Social Communications Center (SCC) became his base of operations until he registered this outfit on October 1965. In 1967, he negotiated for foreign funding to enable SCC to procure modern printing press equipment, thus making his widening evangelization plans more possible via print outputs like Ang Tao, a magazine for rural workers and Halina for urban laborers, both published in 1967. Action Now , for professionals and community leaders, came out in 1968 and garnered the Catholic Mass Media Award in 1969.

Radio soap operas began airing in 1970. Soon after, television and film production started. After nine days of detention after the declaration of martial law in 1972, Fr. Cor went back to work, renaming SCC to Communication Foundation for Asia and housing it in a four-story building made entirely out of 2.3 million pieces of donated bricks.Today, that building still stands and is manned by people who help keep Fr. Lagerwey's legacy alive. Fr. Cor died on August 15, 1995, leaving behind much to be done. To carry on the task of evangelization, CFA still produces Gospel Komiks Magazine for Young People, Jesus Magazine, Pambata Magazine, Baby Jesus Magazine, Barkada Magazine and its radio dramas, primer/ comics, TV documentaries, catechetical materials and training programs geared towards bringing God's Words to children, teenagers, families, and adults here in the Philippines and in Asia.

GLOBE TELECOM
OUTLAST

OUTLAST IS IN MYGLOBE

Outlast, the country's most progressive battery and service station, recently made a big leap in servicing its countless customers through a tie-up project with Globe Telecom using the SMS/Text Messaging service through MyGlobe. Globe subscribers on the road may type the word "motoring", click space and the corresponding keyword on their Globe cellular phone then send to 2333. Keywords include motoring battery, flat, overheat, booster, engine, installbatt electrical, tires, faq, hotlines, stations, and help. Shown signing the contract at the Globe Telecom Plaza are (from left) Jeffrey Chua and Rico Camus, manager and AVP, respectively, of wireless data group-Globe Telecom, Bernadette Pua, general manager of Outlast Battery stations and Jose Relly Tan, Outlast IT consultant. Visit Outlast's website at www.outlastbattery.com.

FOCUS: 17th AD CONGRESS

Asintado sa Pinoy ngayon

VIVA TV SIGNS IN

Viva TV has signed in as meal sponsor for the 17th PAC from Nov. 21-24 at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel. Shown from left are Pana executive director Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon, finance director Jun Alcantara, Viva TV sales director for sports and entertainment Salvador T. Nogoy and vice chair Angelica Suiza.

Special sessions for students, teachers at Ad Congress

WHO is the Pinoy consumer today? Has his or her lifestyle really changed? What do Pinoy kids think and buy these days? What are the myths and truths about teens today? Are we giving the senior market enough attention? How do the OCWs spend their money? How do their spending habits affect the economy?

Students and professors will get the answers to these questions and more in this year's Philippine Advertising Congress to be held on Nov. 22 to 24 at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City. With this year's theme, "Target Market: Asintado sa Pinoy Ngayon", the congress will probe into who the Pinoy consumer really is. Rather than pursuing a mass audience, the congress aims to penetrate the more specific target market.

To reach out to the academe and attract the best talents in the industry, the congress will also conduct special sessions for students and professors and allow them to listen to communication practitioners talk about their roles in the creation of advertising.

For more information about the 17th Philippine Advertising Congress, on registration fees and shuttle expenses and coordination, or to register, get in touch with the Philippine Ad Congress secretariat at Suite 6A Dao I Condominium, 189 Salcedo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City at 892-8359 and 892-8348. Interested parties may also register online at www.philadcongress.com.

Shifting image, retaining commitment

THE YEAR 1968 saw the emergence of Warren briefs as a standard in the undergarment industry. Since then, Warren has successfully established itself as a leading brand committed only to the highest quality and value for its customers money.

Now, in 2001, Warren Manufacturing Corp. comes of age as it takes on the challenges of the changing times with the introduction of its new image presented in its logo, packaging and other fixtures. The change from the original red and black to blue and black combines Warren's original classic look with the younger and bolder appeal of today's generation.

To further showcase this welcome development, Warren has come up with an array of its latest styles to suit today's quality standards in fashion, comfort and value, now available in leading department stores nationwide.

New CEP for leaders, managers

"WE need people with basic skills who can understand technical operations and who can work with the management in a cooperative effort to strengthen the nation's economy."

A relatively new approach to the development of leaders and executives in the private sector has just been introduced in the academic environment. The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), in association with Jose Rizal University (JRU), has formally launched a Competencies Enhancement Program (CEP) for leaders and managers of PCCI members. This was recently formalized in a memorandum of agreement between the PCCI and JRU.

Accordingly, JRU will offer a series of short-term learning courses exclusively for PCCI members, programmed to focus on the enhancement of their leadership and management competencies. The short-term courses will be structured to be credited toward graduate course credits, transferable to most MBA/ MPA or other management graduate programs in duly government-accredited educational institutions.

The PCCI-JRU CEP is unlike the executive training programs in other schools and training firms that concentrate mostly on the new theories, principles, paradigms, and innovations of recent years. The CEP's concept in simple: there is a real need to go back to the basics of management and leadership principles before the introduction to new paradigms and approaches.. It is more like rediscovering the wheel instead of reinventing it.

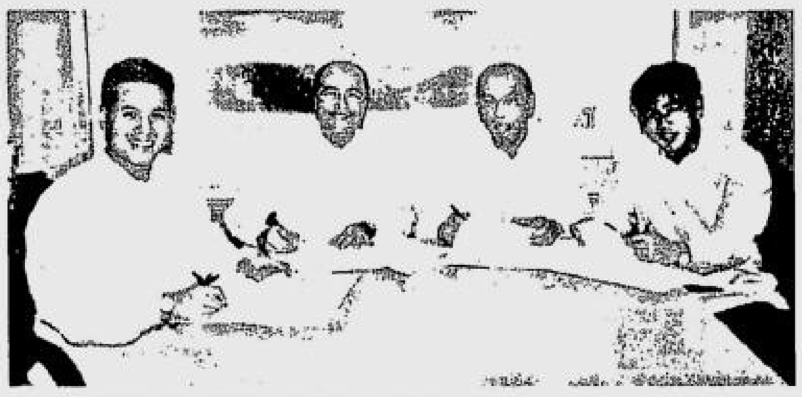
To accomplish this, the program design is wholly participative in style through the sharing of experience and analyzing the successes or failures of such experience in case studies discussed thoroughly in workshops/ clinics. The program shies away, as much as possible, from purely lecture types as is done in most seminars. The faculty is a combination of the strong graduate school professors of JRU but also from veterans and highly experienced leaders and executives from the private sector.

Interested parties may call Grace Morella of PCCI at 843-4133, 843-4102 or 03 (fax), e-mail gmorella@pcci.philcham.org.ph or Yolly Tatad of JRU at 531-8031, 531-6087 (fax), e-mail grad@jrc.edu.ph.

wag magpahuli sa makinis na usapan!
sali na sa
Usapang
Totalinis

ZONROX HEALTH CENTER LECTURES

Zonrox Bleach, in cooperation with several health centers all over Manila, Cavite and Valenzuela, are educating mothers on the importance of cleanliness in their homes. The lecture 'Usapang Totalinis, Praktikal na Misis' informs mothers on how to keep their family environment germ-free in the most cost-efficient way. Shown above is one of the health centers that Zonrox and its team of health educators visited. From the Tayabas Health Center are (from left, front row) barangay health workers Maria Luz Grace Bonus and Ma. Estrella Sambrano, and Dr. Marivelle Sambrano. Second row from left are Rodney Salcedo (Zonrox brand specialist), Melissa Garcia (Zonrox advertising account manager), Glenda dela Cruz (Zonrox health educator), Dr. Ma. Victoria de Guzman (dentist), and Danny Rillera (barangay health worker).



AD AGENCY FOR MAGNIFICAT

7RD Realty Corp. recently appointed Charisms Advertising Inc., as their advertising agency for The Magnificat & Columbarium project. Present during the signing of the contract (from left) were Rafael P. Dizon III, 7RD Realty Inc., Bienvenido V. Rockwell, president and CEO of Charisms Advertising Inc., Rafael J. Dizon Jr., chair, and Jose Romeo S. Gavino, COO, 7RD Realty Inc.

DECS AWARDS BIGGEST SHARE OF BOOKS

An international tie-up of Filipino, Thai and Singaporean companies won the most number of books in the 2000 Social Expenditure Management Project funded by the World Bank for the Department of Education. The alliance involved the Watana Phanit Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd. of Thailand represented by its executive director W. Vinit, The Alkem Company (S) Pte Ltd. of Singapore represented by its managing director Chu Bong, DNS Co. Inc. of the Philippines represented by its president engineer Simon M. Crisostomo, SD Publications Inc. of the Philippines represented by its owner and publisher Esther and Nila Mata, JTW Corp. of the Philippines represented by its owner and publisher Julius Gerard A. Magno and JGM & S Corp of the Philippines represented by owner and publisher Arne Queenie E. Madrilejos. The six representatives met recently in Makati Shangri-La Hotel to sign the MOA formalizing their tie up.

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PMAP OUTSTANDING EMPLOYER

United Laboratories chair and CEO Joselito D. Campos Jr. (3rd from left) proudly raises the Outstanding Employer of 2001 award given by the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) in Baguio City recently. Shown sharing his victory are (from left) PMAP VP Ernesto Espinosa, Labor Undersecretary Jose Española, Unilab VP-HROD Imelda Centeno, Unilab president-COO Carlos Ejercito, PMAP board of judges chair Philip Juico, PMAP president Freddie Marquez and PMAP director Robert Policarpio. It was the second Outstanding Employer Award for Unilab, the first being conferred to it in 1979. Unilab was also named one of the top ten best employers in the Philippine category of the Asian Wall Street-Far Eastern Economic Review-Hewitt Associates' Best Employers in Asia Award.

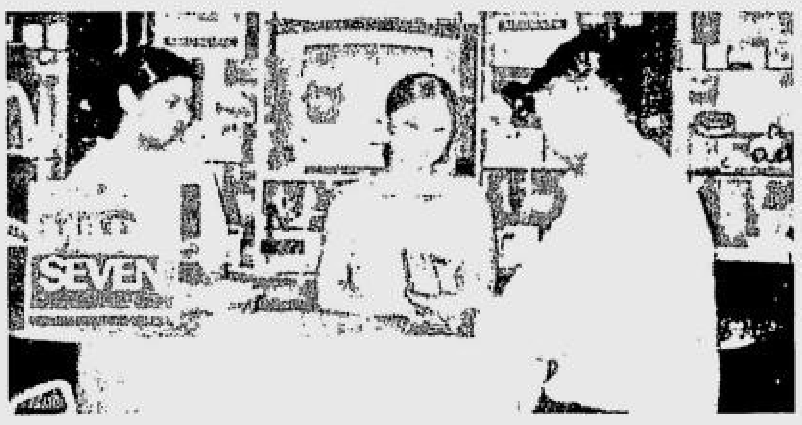
BITS & Clips

CDO hosts 1st ICT challenge

THE FIRST Mindanao ICT challenge will be held in Cagayan de Oro City from Nov. 19-22 at the Dynasty Court Hotel. This event is an inter-school competition organized by the Association of Booksellers for the Academe and the Professions (Abap) in cooperation with Freeway Advertising. The competitions consist of Computer Visions sponsored by STI. The second category is the Arts and Literature sponsored by SunStar Cagayan de Oro. This event is in tandem with Abap's 2nd Cagayan de Oro Book Fair. Visitors can buy various kinds of books from the 24 booths featured. The bookfair also features three seminars for teachers and librarians. For inquiries, call Beth Solquio (02) 927-9858 in Quezon City, professor Annabelle Acedera, director of libraries, Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro City, telefax (08822) 723116 loc. 2301, 2302, or Eric Quilisadio of Freeway Advertising at (08822) 723-236 or 0918-7302415.

ASLP seminar

THE ASSOCIATION of Special Libraries of the Philippines (ASLP) is sponsoring a seminar workshop on "Communication Skills: the Use and Application" from Nov. 21 to 23 at the Hyatt Hotel, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Chief Justice Hilario Davide will be the Fellowship luncheon speaker and inducting officer of the 2002 ASLP board. Trade and industry Undersecretary Nelly Favis Villafuerte will be the keynote and resource speaker. For reservation and inquiries, please call Tina Tolentino at 893-9590, Cora Garcia at 524-9217, or Mila Santos-Ong, 521-7223.



MILD SEVEN SMOKING LOUNGE

While a common sight internationally, the Mild Seven Smoking Lounge, shown above, is a first in the country and is now in four major malls: the Festival Mall in Alabang, Robinsons Place in Ermita, Robinsons Galleria in Ortigas and Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall. No less than a smoker's oasis, the Mild Seven Smoking Lounge is relaxing in the truest sense of the word. The spacious lounge beckons you to enjoy a satisfying stick or two of Mild Seven within its clear walls. You can watch TV, park yourself on the plush sofas, and have a good conversation while enjoying the smooth, clear taste of Mild Seven. It's bliss. And after your smoke, you may even walk home with a price. That's because the Mild Seven Smoking Lounge also doubles as a redemption center for the Mild Seven Scratch and Draw. Mild Seven is giving away prizes like CD walkmans to lucky winners.

Bayview Park Hotel bridal event

BAYVIEW Park Hotel Manila, in cooperation with Blessed Concepts Network, will stage the most grandiose Bridal/Debut Fair & Exhibit from Nov. 24 to 25 entitled "Unforgettable". Highlighting the event is the "Grand Bridal and Debut Fashion Show" featuring the creations of fashion tycoons such as Renee Salud, Frederick Peralta, Gregg Centeno, Jun-Jun Cambe, Alex Bitong, Edgar Madamba, Chito Sanchez, Conrad Graves, Pilar Pineda, Joel Pros, Joel Bautista, Paola Angela Nicomedes, Willikers Men's Apparel, Michelle Lim, Ramon Favila, Boying Eustaquio, Cherry Carriaga of Drezzee Boutique, Merlene Marcelo, Gener Gozum, and Edward Teng.

This event is in cooperation with the Banquet Specialty Shoppe Inc, with sponsors Audio Man Enterprises, Love in Blooms By Jocelyn Pafin, Cosmetique Asia, Solfeggio, Butterfly Magic, and Events Network.

The fashion show is directed by Raymond Villanueva. The fair is open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call Bayview Park at 526-1555 or Blessed Concepts Network, 256-6834.

Gloom begins to lift from US economy

WASHINGTON—The gloom appears to be lifting from the US economy as it shakes off the effects of the Sept. 11 terrorist strikes, encouraged by progress in the US-led military campaign in Afghanistan.

Wall Street is showing signs of bouncing back, with the Dow Jones industrials rising nearly 3 percent this week and surpassing pre-Sept. 11 levels, while investors are banking on a rise in firms' profits five or six months down the road.

In addition to a series of successes in the military campaign in Afghanistan and a 10-day period devoid of anthrax-laced-letter scares, several favorable economic indicators have helped boost the confidence of consumers and businesses alike.

The Commerce Department on Wednesday announced a 7.1-percent jump in retail sales in October, aided by the zero-percent financing plans offered by automakers to help fuel sluggish sales and move their inventory before the end of the year.

But even without taking automobiles into account, sales have increased 1.8 percent, practically erasing the 1.9-percent drop registered in September.

"Yesterday's report suggested that retailers are offering discounts and other deals that consumers can't refuse," said economist Ian Shepherdson of High Frequency Economics.

"Those who have a job are enjoying (tax) rebates, refinancings, lower interest rates and rising real wages, so spending is going to increase," he added.

Ken Goldstein, a Conference Board economist, noted that Americans "are starting to get over, to some degree, what happened in September."

"Certainly, the pessimism is not turning into a national depression of the spirit," he said.

But the economy must show continued progress in order for Americans to maintain this positive outlook, and that is a tall order, since relatively high unemployment rates continue to put a damper on spending.

The White House and many forecasters are counting on a solid comeback in 2002, encouraged by a series of interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve and an economic stimulus plan being debated in Congress.

Weak inflation—the government announced Friday a 0.3-percent drop in consumer prices in October—gives the Fed extra latitude to relax its monetary policy without the risk of overheating once the economy picks up again, according to Merrill Lynch economist Gerald Cohen.

But the drop in prices, coupled with a drop in energy costs, does not signal a lasting deflationary tendency in the economy, he cautioned, predicting a 1.5-percent hike in prices in 2002.

Cohen stressed that the sharp drop in gas prices would help stimulate spending.

And even the 1.1-percent drop in industrial output in October announced Friday—the 13th consecutive monthly decline and the biggest since November 1990—tends to show that businesses are in the process of wrapping up a correction in their stocks, economist Thomas Duesterberg said.

The International Monetary Fund forecast annual growth of about 0.7 percent for the United States in 2002.

The US gross domestic product fell 0.4 percent in the third quarter of 2001 and is expected to remain negative for the last quarter of the year, as well. *AFP*

Ford drops hybrid sport-utility designs

DEARBORN, Michigan—Ford Motor Co. has killed plans to use a form of hybrid power on the Explorer sport-utility vehicle, an effort designed to sharply improve fuel efficiency, a newspaper said Friday.

The Explorer is the world's best-selling sport-utility vehicle.

Ford engineers and other insiders told the Detroit Free Press that the automaker acted because of a cash crunch and less success with the gasoline-electric hybrid than expected.

As a result, the automaker decided to limit the hybrid system to smaller trucks and cars, the newspaper said. The system tends to boost efficiency more in smaller vehicles.

The so-called mild hybrid uses an integrated starter generator. When the vehicle stops, the gas engine shuts off. At acceleration, the system restarts instantly and gives the vehicle a boost to take off.

The starter generator was a key component to Ford's plan to boost sport-utility fuel efficiency by 25 percent by 2005, a promise that then chief executive Jacques Nasser made in July.

Ford declined to comment on the move to drop the hybrid-powered Explorer but said it stood by the 25-percent improvement goal.

The automaker's environmental goals have taken on greater prominence because its chair and new chief executive, William Clay Ford Jr., has been an advocate of making automakers more environmentally sensitive. *AP*

Petroleum price war may bring relief to US

VIENNA, Austria—Oil prices plunged to their lowest level in more than two years despite efforts by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to stop the free fall, which analysts said could further push down prices at the gas pump.

Setting up a showdown with Russia and other producers outside the cartel, Opec—struggling to stabilize plummeting prices—agreed Wednesday to cut output beginning next year, but only if non-Opec producers also tighten their taps.

Opec delegates said they would reduce their daily production target by 1.5 million barrels, or 6 percent, starting Jan. 1, on the condition that outsiders such as Russia, the world's No. 3 producer, cut their own output by 500,000 barrels a day.

Kuwaiti Oil Minister Adel al-Sabeeh said Thursday that crude prices could fall as low as $10 a barrel should the standoff between Opec and non-Opec producers over oil output persist.

As the market moved closer to an oil price war, traders reacted almost instantly to the uncertainty with a sharp sell-off in petroleum futures.

December crude oil futures dropped as low as $17.15 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange on Thursday before closing down $2.29 at $17.45 a barrel, the lowest level for a front-month contract since June 1999.

December heating oil futures tumbled 5.03 cents to close at $51.09 a barrel, their lowest level since August 1999, while the December gasoline futures contract ended down 4.53 cents at 48.84 cents a gallon, a 29-month low.

In initial trading Friday, oil prices rebounded somewhat. In London on the International Petroleum Exchange, Brent crude from the North Sea for delivery in January was up 67 cents at $18 after the contract fell nearly 10 percent on Thursday.

The global economic slowdown has dented demand for crude, and lingering uncertainty from the terrorist attacks on the United States has worsened Opec's financial problems. Prices have tumbled by a third since Sept. 11 alone.

Although analysts warned that a prolonged slump in oil prices could discourage companies from exploring new fields and developing older ones—setting the stage for sharply higher prices in the future—the immediate fallout could be lower prices for consumers for gasoline and home heating oil.

For the short term, at least, they could also provide relief to airlines skirting bankruptcy since the attacks by cutting prices for jet fuel and help truckers by easing diesel prices.

"This is good news for a world economy that could use a boost right now," said Carl Weinberg, chief economist at High Frequency Economics in Valhalla, New York. *AP*

SIA cuts 114 people from training program

SINGAPORE—Singapore Airlines, hit by hard times, has dropped 114 people from a paid training program for new cabin crew, a spokesperson for the national carrier said Saturday.

"Even if the cabin crew graduated, there wouldn't be jobs for them," the spokesperson said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Singapore Airlines, known for its high service standards and its record as one of Asia's most profitable carriers, has been hit hard by the global economic downturn and the effect of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the air travel industry.

The airline has cut salaries, reduced flights and canceled orders for planes as it attempts to emerge from what its chief executive, Cheong Choong Kong, recently described as the "most difficult" period in the company's 29-year history.

Singapore Airlines' net profit plunged 88 percent to S$134.8 million ($73.4 million) for the first half of this fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, compared with last year.

It is expected to post its first-ever loss for the year ending March 31, 2002.

The trainees affected by the cuts started the course between one and three months ago, and would have finished in the next few months, the spokesperson said.

Foreign members of the program will be given free tickets home, the spokesperson added. *AP*

Hitachi, NEC to work on corporate software

TOKYO—Japanese hi-tech giants Hitachi Ltd. and NEC Corp. will jointly develop software for corporate backbone systems, a news report said Saturday.

The two firms have also agreed to join forces in supplying their existing software products, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said without citing sources.

"The move will further promote the partnership between the two firms, which already have a joint venture specializing in memory chips," the financial daily said.

Officials from Hitachi and NEC could not be reached for comment.

"By jointly developing software, Hitachi and NEC hope to slash the time needed for development and related costs," the newspaper said. "They plan to sell the software separately."

The two firms will first develop network management software that can monitor a client company's systems for smooth operations, as well as to ensure security of its computer systems, the Nihon Keizai said.

"Demand for such network security software is on the rise as many companies and government agencies are working to bolster the security of their systems to protect confidential corporate and personal information," it said. *AFP*

Employees sue J&J, claim discrimination

NEW YORK—Johnson & Johnson, the drugs, consumer products and medical devices heavyweight, faces a lawsuit from employees alleging racial discrimination in its hiring and promotion practices.

Two employees of the New Brunswick, New Jersey-based company on Thursday filed a suit in federal district court in Newark, New Jersey, alleging that the company excluded black and Hispanic workers from senior management positions and hired them at salaries lower than those of their white peers.

Johnson & Johnson said it had not yet received a copy of the complaint and was unable to comment on it. However, the company said it had "long promoted workplace diversity and equal opportunity employment."

"We take the concerns of our employees very seriously," said company spokesperson Marc Monseau. "We continue to take steps to ensure that our workplace is open and merit-based."

The plaintiffs' lawyers include Cyrus Mehri of Washington-based Mehri & Skalet and OJ Simpson defender Johnnie Cochran. Mehri said his firm had been investigating Johnson & Johnson's employment practices for about a year.

Mehri prosecuted the two biggest racial-discrimination cases in US corporate history. In 1994, he sued Texaco Corp. The case was settled in 1997 for $176 million. In 1999, he sued Coca-Cola Co. The case was settled earlier this year for $192 million.

The plaintiffs in the suit against Johnson & Johnson are Nilda Gutierrez, a Hispanic woman who works as a company recruiting consultant, and Linda Morgan, a black woman who is a manager at a company subsidiary. The suit seeks class-action status on behalf of more than 1,000 employees, Mehri said. *Reuters*

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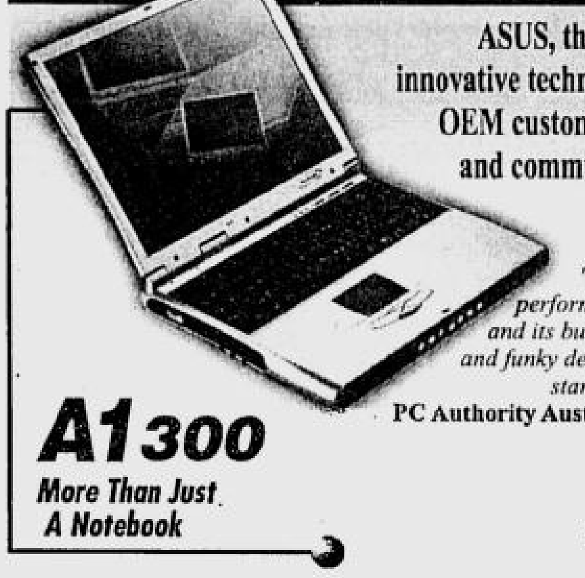

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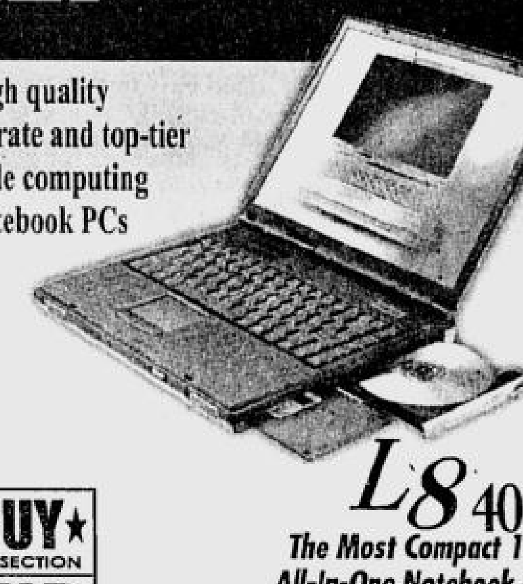

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4pm - 5pm	BusinessOpportunities in the Relaunch of Permatex in the Phils.	Permatex / Timken
30 November 2001		
2pm - 3pm	New Technology Tools & Equipment, Chemical Products & Assembly Systems For Use in the Automotive Industry	Centro-Aire Inc.
4pm - 5pm	Magnetic Treatment of Fuel	Taytan Int'l.
5pm - 6pm	Product Presentation	King Shoes Manufacturing
1 December 2001		
11am - 12nn	Brake Pads & Fuel Injection EFI	Quantum Spares
1pm - 2pm	New POLYGuard Bull Bars Launching	Liftruk Int'l Trading
2pm - 3pm	Universal Tools Presentation	Wiha Far East Company
3pm - 4pm	Defensive Driving Seminar	Nissan Motor Philippines
4pm - 5pm	Eyquem Spark Plugs Presentation	Eascorp Automotive
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*"Come
to
Me,
all
you
who
are
weary
and
burdened,
and
I will
give
you
rest."*
Matthew 11:28

His Excellency Most Rev. Francisco C. San Diego, together with the Clergy, Religious and the laity of the Diocese of San Pablo, hereby express their sincerest condolences to the family of the late

Rev. Fr. Arsenio "Jun" Plata Jr.

His remains lie in state at Church of Our Lady of Candelaria, Mabitac, Laguna. His body will be transferred on November 19 to Julugan 3, Tanza, Cavite after the 10:00 a.m. concelebrated Mass.

His interment will be on November 26 after the 2:00 p.m. Funeral Mass at the Resurrection Parish Church, Julugan, Tanza, Cavite.

PERSEVERANDO Y. ESTACIO

June 29, 1922 - November 17, 2001, 79 years old

His loving wife **Lilia**; children and children-in-laws **Vivian** and **Albert Noche**, **Editha** and **Fred Cortiñas**, **Ejerico** and **Wanda Silva**, **Josie**, **Nito** and **Carl**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers, sisters and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.

"My soul finds rest to God alone, from Him comes my salvation."

RONALDO "RONNIE" A. BALMEO

1955-2001

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 17th day of November 2001 at the age of 46.

His loving wife **FRELITA (Baby)**; children **JERICO, IVY JOYCE, IVY ROSE, JAKE** and **KAYE**; dear relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Funeral Mass shall be held on November 22, 2001 at 10:30 a.m. to be followed by cremation services at 12:00 noon at the Loyola Memorial Chapel Crematorium, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ROBERTO P. VELARDE

who joined our Creator on November 14, 2001

convey our sincerest thanks to all those who condoled with us, offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, went to the wake and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and those who in countless ways, helped and comforted us in the hour of our bereavement.

MARGARET KRISTINE V. DE VEYRA

Peacefully joined our Lord on November 16, 2001 at the age of 22.

Her parents **JOHNNY** and **GLADYS DE VEYRA**; sisters **MONINA** and **MARIAN** together with the rest of her family and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

We will certainly miss ***MARGARET*** as we bid her farewell and give her back to God with all our love.

Her remains lie in state at Capitol Memorial Chapels. Interment will be on November 21, 2001 at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, QC after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

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†

Our Dearly Beloved Nanay

CONSTANCIA "Tanching" CAJUCOM QUINTOS

Peacefully joined her husband Amadeo R. Quintos Sr. in the arms of our Lord at the age of 96.

Loving children and in-laws **Amadeo Jr.** (†) and **Norma**, **Ricardo** (†) and **Gloria**, **Ching** and **Jun** (†) **Austria**, **Baby** and **Bern Jalandoni**, **Guillermo** (†), **Kit** and **Nene Lichauco**, **Ben** and **Linda**, **Tony** and **Gloria**, **Johnny**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Capilla de San Francisco, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Daily Masses will be held at 8:00 every evening.

The Funeral Mass will be on Wednesday, November 21, 2001 at 9:00 AM followed by a private Cremation ceremony at the Loyola Crematorium, Makati City.

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CLASSIFIEDS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR RESETTLEMENT AREAS

The National Housing Authority is soliciting proposals from real estate developers to provide developed or partially developed subdivisions with at least 500 housing units constructed or to be constructed for Cebu City, and at least 300 housing units constructed or to be constructed for Iloilo City, or rawland of at least 10 hectares for Cebu City and five (5) hectares for Iloilo City, with proposal to develop the same as socialized housing within the city of Cebu or nearby city of Talisay and Iloilo City. These project sites shall be utilized as resettlement sites for families in the danger areas and along waterways in the cities of Cebu and Iloilo as provided for under RA 8522 (Poverty Alleviation Fund-3).

Interested parties may secure the Terms of Reference (TOR) directly from the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City or through the Project Manager, NHA Cebu Project Office, 2/F Yusing Building, F. Ramos St., Cebu City and through the Project Manager, NHA Iloilo Project Office, Bgy. Bakhaw, Mandurriao, Iloilo City upon submission of a Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of P200.00, and thereafter, submit the specific proposal in accordance with the TOR together with complete supporting documents addressed to the Chairman, Project Evaluation Committee, National Housing Authority at the NHA Cebu Project Office, on the deadline set in the TOR. The last day of issuance of the Terms of Reference is on **November 21, 2001**. The Pre-submission Conference for both projects shall be held on **November 23, 2001**, 10:00 a.m. at the NHA Cebu Project Office.

The NHA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive formalities on any defects therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager/
Chairman, Project Evaluation Committee

(PDI – Nov. 5, 12 & 19, 2001)

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 928-8505 loc. 153 & 253

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

A. The Bureau of Agricultural Research invites all interested Bidders to pre-qualify for the bidding of supply and installation of IT equipment.

B. The following pre-qualification requirements in two copies, duly certified must be submitted to the Bids and Awards Committee of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR-BAC) at 3rd Flr. ATI Bldg. Elliptical Rd., Diliman, Quezon City to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:
1. Company Profile
2. SEC Registration (Corporation)
   DTI Registration (Sole proprietorship)
   (Accreditation for Repair Shop)
3. License to Operate (Mayor's Permit)
4. ITR for the last two years (stamped by BIR)
5. Audited Financial Statement for the last two years
6. VAT/E-VAT/NON-VAT Registration
7. Number of Employees
8. List of clients within the year with their respective telephone numbers and addresses
9. The company must indicate in its application the category/classification/grouping they would like to participate in
10. Certification that the company is not affiliated with other companies with similar nature of business
11. Listing of product offered
12. Certification of dealership from authorized distributor

NOTE:
- ONLY PRE-QUALIFIED BIDDERS WILL BE ISSUED THE INVITATION TO BID DOCUMENTS AND BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING.
- ONLY AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTORS/RESELLERS/DEALERS WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING.

C. Deadline for submission: **November 26, 2001**

D. Bidding schedule shall be announced to all pre-qualified bidders.

E. The Bureau of Agricultural Research reserves the right to review the qualifications of a selected bidder, subject to technical, financial and production criteria, reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect therein and accept the offer considered most advantageous to the Bureau.

F. For further particulars, please inquiries at Telephone Nos.: 928-8505/928-8624 local 153 or 253 c/o Ms. Corazon L. Barretto or Mr. Bernie S. Manuel.

(Sgd.) **ELISEO R. PONCE**
Director

(PDI--Nov. 18, 19 & 20, 2001)

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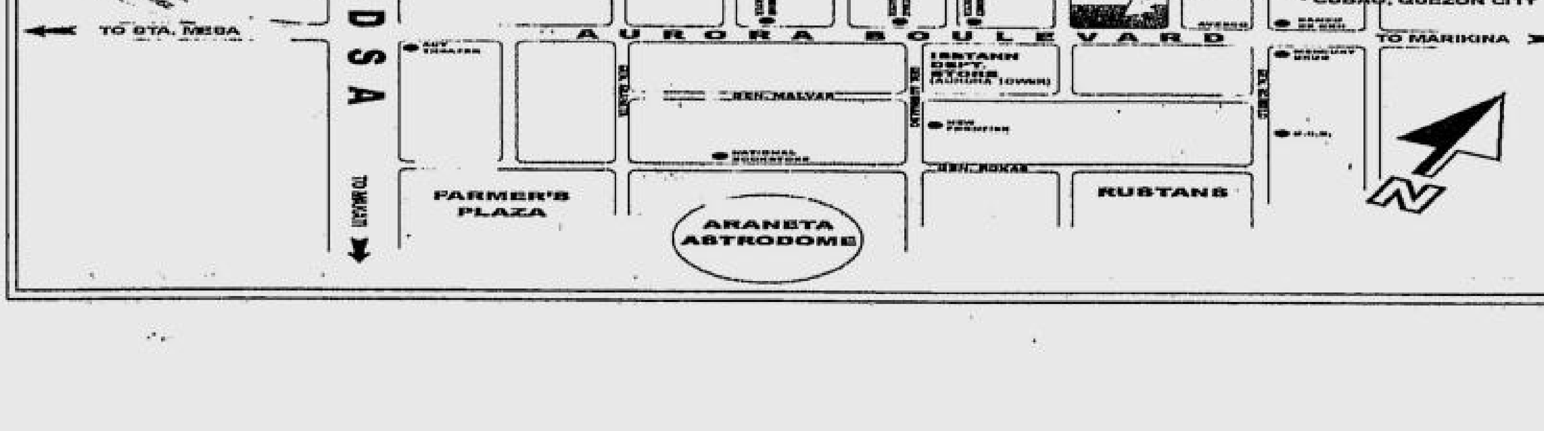

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS

INVITATION FOR BIDS

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received an ODA Loan from JAPAN BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION (hereinafter referred to as JBIC), in the amount of 5,728 million Yen towards the cost of the Selected Airports (Trunkline) Development Project, Loan Agreement No. PH-P190 signed on 10 September 1998, and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of the loan to payments under the contract for Equipment Procurement for the Immediate Improvements of Bacolod and Tacloban Airports.
   The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Transportation and Communications, now request bids from suppliers for the supply and delivery of the following equipment (the "Goods") in a one-package contract:

TACLOBAN

Item No.	Equipment	Quantity
1	Mechanical Sweeper	1
2	Multi-disk Mower	1
3	Tractor	1
4	Dump Truck	1
5	Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicle	3
6	X-ray Scanner for Check-in Baggage	1
7	X-ray Scanner for Hand-carried Baggage	1
8	Spare Parts/Consumables	1 lot

BACOLOD

Item No.	Equipment	Quantity
1	Mechanical Sweeper	1
2	Multi-disk Mower	1
3	Tractor	1
4	Dump Truck	1
5	Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicle	3
6	X-ray Scanner for Check-in Baggage	2
7	X-ray Scanner for Hand-carried Baggage	2
8	Spare Parts/Consumables	1 lot

   Disbursement of an ODA Loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans." No party other than the Government of the Republic of the Philippines shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claim to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only a part of the project cost. As for the remaining portion, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines will take appropriate measures for finance.

2. JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:
   (a) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
   (b) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans if it at any times determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA.
3. The Department of Transportation and Communications now invites sealed bids in a two-envelope system from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of the Goods for the purpose of the Project.
4. The minimum requirement for qualification of a supplier are:
   (a) average annual turnover as prime supplier (defined as billing for works in progress and completed) over the last 5 years of US$ 50 million;
   (b) successful experience as prime supplier in the execution of at least 3 projects of a nature and complexity comparable to the proposed contract within the last 10 years; and
   (c) obtain an exclusive sales agreement for this Project from manufacturers of the fire fighting vehicles and X-ray scanners, which shall have been manufacturing similar equipment for not less than ten (10) years.
5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information on the bid form and inspect the bidding documents at the office of:
   The Project Director
   Selected Airports (Trunkline) Development Project
   DOTC-Project Management Office
   Unit 7D, 7th Floor, Strata 2000 Building,
   Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Metro Manila
   Telephone: +63 (2) 637-1187
   Facsimile: +63 (2) 637-3061
6. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased from **19 November 2001** up to **21 November 2001** (from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM), by any interested eligible bidder upon submission of a written application to the above address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of 10,000 Pesos or US$ 200 at the DOTC Cashier's Office, 5th Floor, the Columbia Tower, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City.
7. The estimated date of award is on **July 2002.**
8. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 5,000,000 Pesos and must be delivered in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders on or before 2:00 PM on **18 January 2002** at the DOTC Project Management Office, Unit 7D, 7th Flr., Strata 2000 Building Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Metro Manila and will be publicly opened immediately thereafter.
9. The Department of Transportation and Communications will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of bids.

(Sgd.) **ALAN ADENA TAN**
SPBAC Chairman

(PDI – Nov. 10, 14 & 19, 2001)

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50 artworks for auction

FIFTY art pieces will be auctioned off come Nov. 28 in a fundraising event for the Special Children's Productivity Center Inc.

Entitled "Hand-in-Hand...Together," this event aims to raise funds to support the livelihood projects of special children. Organized by Power Schemes & Workmates Inc. "Hand-in-Hand...Together" features the works of Philippine arts master renowned artists and the special children themselves. Master of ceremonies and auction master is Johnny Litton.

Sponsored by Total Finaelf, 360 Holdings Inc., Pagcor and 105.1 Crossover, the auction will be at 5 p.m. at the Skytop function room of the Hotel Inter-Continental Manila. Cocktails will precede the auction proper.

67th National Book Week

THE 2001 National Book Week Committtee, chaired by Mona Lisa P. Leguiab, announces the activities of the 67th National Book Week celebration on Nov. 23-30, jointly sponsored by the Philippine Librarians Association Inc. and The National Library. The theme of this year's celebration is "Books + Knowledge = Brighter Future."

The NBW will open on Nov. 23 with a mass to be held at The National Library auditorium to be officiated by Fr. Paul de Vera, OSB and Fr. Gaspar Sigaya, DOM, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. The invited keynote speaker is Representative Edmond O. Reyes, Chair, House Committee on Basic Education. A forum on "Building Literacy Through Reading" will follow at 10 a.m. to 12 noon. The resource speaker is Dr. Leticia Penano-Ho of the UP College of Education. There will be a TIANGGE at the National Library to be held at the 2nd Floor Lobby. On Nov. 24 there will be a WALK for a CAUSE 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. On Nov. 28 a visit to selected libraries will be conducted. Assembly is at UST Central Library at 7 a.m. Other library associations have lined up their respective series of seminar-workshop.

On Nov. 30, the much-awaited fellowship luncheon will be held at The Manila Midtown Hotel, Ermita, Manila from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Awards and prizes will be given during this occasion.

PSLIS seminar workshop

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS) in coordination with the Civil Service Commission will conduct a seminar-workshop on "Corporate Profile of Librarians and Information Professionals as Civil Servants" on Nov. 27-29 at the Securities and Exchange Commission, Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

For inquiries, please call Medy Gregorio, Philippine Daily Inquirer at 897-8808 loc. 329/330; Lily Echeverri at 929-2180 and Lyn Mimay at 724-1994.

The latest innovation in writing from Cross

PENS are another stylish way for men and women to accessorize. Pen maker A.T. Cross has developed a 3.5-inch pen specifically for keeping in touch with the younger and trendier generation. This sleek version marries ergonomic features with cutting edge design.

Introducing pure energy and fun self-contained in a stylish, futuristic fuselage, the clever design lets you see the color of the ink in your pen. It uses gel ink and has a soft touch grip. The pen comes in six color combinations with a choice of six ink colors.

The new Ion pen is compact enough to hang from a keychain or fit in a small purse. About the size of lipstick container, it comes with an easy on/off quick clip for use with a lanyard or key ring.

All Cross writing instruments and desk set penholder comes with a lifetime warranty against mechanical failure, regardless of age. For corp. orders and inquiries please call Joan at 894-2040.

Cocolife's HealthCare attends to client's distinct needs

COCOLIFE recently offered to the public a new service through its Cocolife HealthCare Program. The program aims to make modern health facilities available to larger segments of the population without sacrificing value for money through reasonable and affordable packages.

"Premium service is what we offer to all Cocolife HealthCare policyholders" Mel Maagma, head of the HealthCare Department states. He hopes to achieve this through a number of value-added features unique only to Cocolife Healthcare Program.

Maagma adds that "a unique feature a Cocolife HealthCare is the customization of its services." While most healthcare programs offer standardized rates and health benefits, Cocolife provides an alternative. Cocolife HealthCare customizes its services and benefits according to the needs and financial capability of its planholders. He believes that clients have individual and distinct needs, so product design should meet those needs.

He further adds that a value-added feature of the product is its streamlined operation and administration. Policyholders are assured of a fast and efficient service from its network of service providers-accredited hospitals, clinics and doctors-thus ensuring that Cocolife planholders are given preferential attention. Cocolife makes sure that its network of service providers are well taken care of, thus ensuring planholders of immediate attention especially in cases of an emergency.

Another distinct advantage of the Cocolife HealthCare Program, is that it is the only HMO in the industry to be accredited and regulated by the Insurance Commission. This assures the policyholders of a settlement should a controversy arise between a policyholder and the service provider.

These reasons, together with Cocolife's unwavering service to its policyholders, is probably why it continues to attract corporate accounts. Maagma foresees that "Cocolife HealthCare will soon be the healthcare program of choice by companies who truly intend to provide a more responsive healthcare program to their employees."

To date, Cocolife HealthCare services more than 100,000 members nationwide belonging to more than 200 corporate accounts posting P161 million premium income in 2000. It has over 250 accredited hospitals, over 100 clinics and about 3,000 doctors nationwide.

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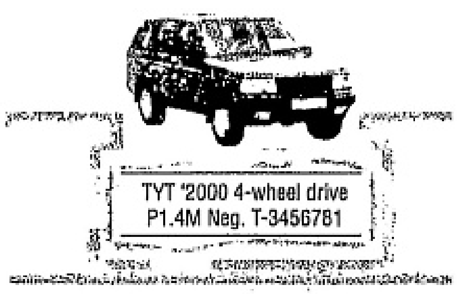

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Philip Morris plans new company name

NEW YORK—Philip Morris.

It's a pronounceable name known around the world. A name that invokes memories of the tobacconist who opened a shop in London in the 1800s. And now, it's a name that the company wants to distance itself from.

Philip Morris Cos. Inc. on Thursday proposed a corporate name change to Altria Group Inc.

Altria—a coined term that comes from "altus"—the Latin word for "high"—was chosen to reflect its "peak performance," the company said. Still, the move is being viewed by many as a clear sign that the company no longer wants to be shrouded in a name synonymous with cigarettes.

"We fully expected some criticism," Philip Morris senior vice president for corporate affairs Steven Parrish said during a Friday conference call with analysts and others. "Obviously, we're going to monitor it very carefully and we'll respond where appropriate."

Analysts questioned the move but did not seem alarmed.

"I don't think people will care in six months anyway," said Prudential Securities tobacco analyst Rob Campagnino, who was not concerned about investors voting against the change.

"I think shareholders love Geoff, and if Geoff says he loves it, shareholders are going to love it," he said, referring to Philip Morris chair and chief executive Geoffrey Bible.

Coining a new word for a company name is not new. A bevy of other companies have come up with new words for their names, including a number that start with "A"—such as Altera Corp., Agilent Technologies Inc., Aon Corp. and Accenture Ltd., the consulting firm formerly known as Andersen Consulting, which went public earlier this year.

Accenture reportedly spent some $175 million on marketing, but Philip Morris on Friday said the cost of their plans were "not even close" to the $100-million mark.

Parrish said the project had been "surprisingly inexpensive so far" and he did not think it would cost much going forward. While the company is taking out full-page ads in some Monday newspapers, there are no other ad plans right now.

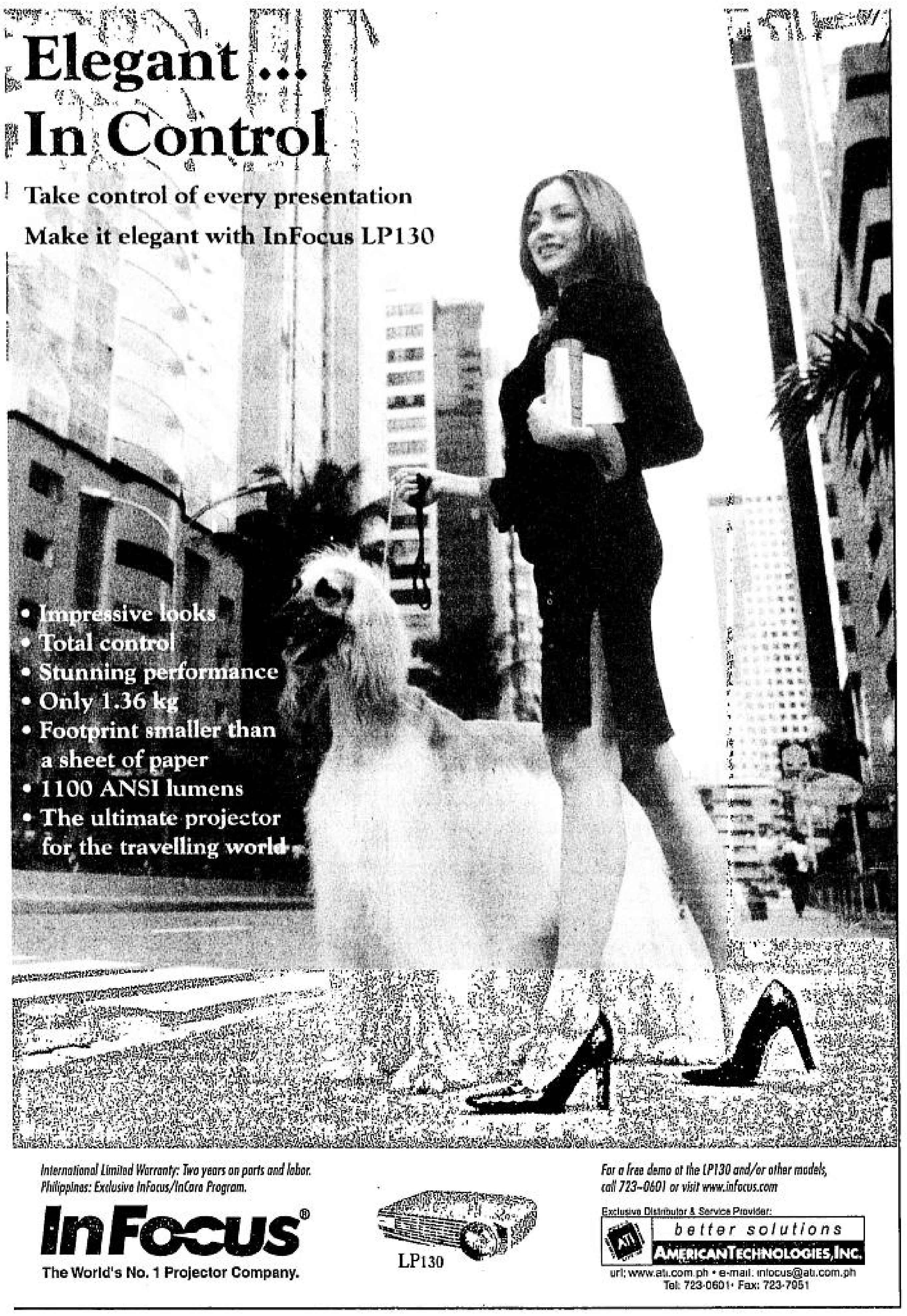
Still the home of Cheez Whiz

If the change is approved by shareholders at next April's annual meeting, Philip Morris will start to use the new name for its corporate moniker, but the operating companies that the public is familiar with will retain their own personas.

Kraft Foods Inc. will still make Cheez Whiz and Planters nuts, Miller Brewing Co. will still brew Miller Genuine Draft and Red Dog, and yes, Philip Morris USA and Philip Morris International will still sell cigarettes.

"The name Philip Morris really means tobacco to people," Parrish said. "It has a long and proud heritage with tobacco, and people strongly associate the name Philip Morris with tobacco."

While the company's extensive corporate image campaign has improved its overall image "significantly" since its October 1999 launch, "there was still confusion about the tobacco issue, and therefore, our corporate identity," Parrish said. *Reuters*



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Arabs urged to close 'digital gap' with industrial nations

DUBAI—Arab officials and experts meeting in the Gulf "e-capital" of Dubai this week underlined the urgency of "closing the digital gap" separating Arab nations from their industrialized counterparts.

Egyptian Supply and Internal Trade Minister Hasan Kheder sounded the alarm at the opening of an Arab businessmen's conference that focused on investment in information technology.

"The digital gap separating us from industrial nations is huge and keeps widening to the detriment of developing countries. It must be narrowed," he said.

His remarks were echoed by Raafat Radwan, who chairs the Egyptian Council of Ministers' Information and Decision Support Center.

The Arabs must take "a technological leap" if they are to catch up with the IT advances of industrial nations, he said. "There's no time to lose."

Speaker after speaker voiced the same argument, citing persuasive statistics to substantiate their case.

"There are only 3.5 million Internet users in the Arab world out of a total population of some 275 million. This compares with 94.2 million Internet users in the United States and 23.1 million in Western Europe," said Fuad Shaker, secretary general of the Union of Arab Banks.

"E-commerce in the Arab world amounts to around 40 million dollars, that is just 0.01 percent of the world total," noted Khaled Abu Ismail, head of the General Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. *AFP*

Bristol to lay off 1,000

NEW YORK—Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. is eliminating 1,000 jobs, or about 2 percent of its work force, as part of a move to refocus itself as a pure pharmaceutical company.

More layoffs are possible as the reorganization continues through mid-2002, spokesperson Charles Borgognoni said.

The cuts would affect all divisions of the company, although the nine sites in New Jersey would suffer most, losing a total of 350 jobs.

Borgognoni wouldn't disclose the savings achieved from the layoffs and didn't know if the cuts would result in a charge against fourth-quarter earnings.

When all layoffs are complete, the New York City-based company will have about 45,000 employees worldwide.

The announcement comes a month after Bristol-Myers completed its $7.8 billion acquisition of DuPont Pharmaceutical Co. and laid off 2,000 of its 5,000 employees.

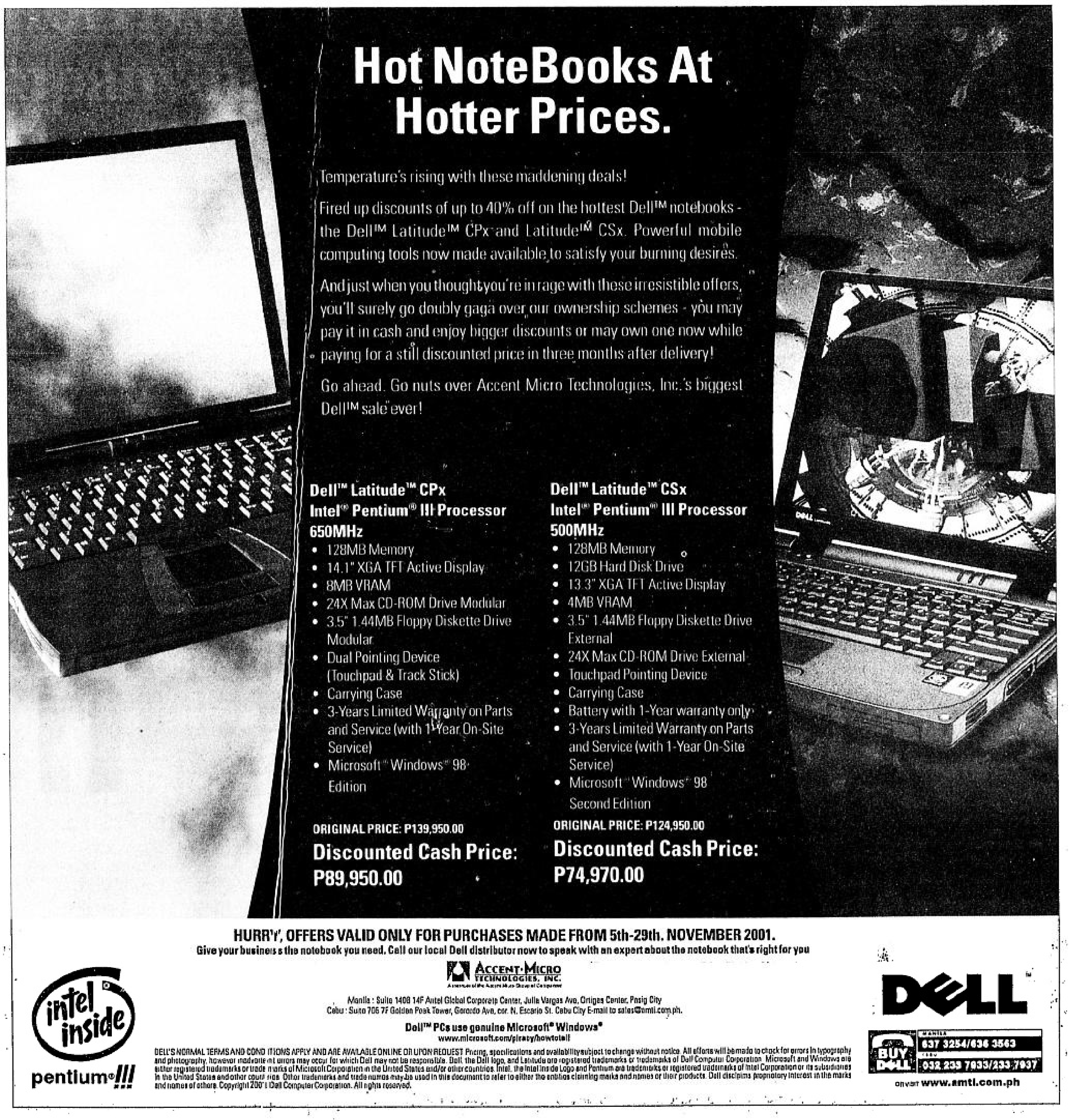
The DuPont acquisition was part of company's recent strategic moves.

Bristol-Myers, which had been holding a number of different health-related operations, has spun off orthopedic medical device maker Zimmer Holding Inc., and sold its Clairol hair-care business to Procter & Gamble Co. for $4.95 billion.

Meanwhile, it acquired DuPont's pharmaceutical division and also spent $1 billion to purchase a 20-percent stake in ImClone Systems Inc., which has a promising experimental cancer drug.

"The cuts are reflective of our move toward becoming a more focused pharmaceutical company," said Borgognoni.

He said the affected employees would be paid through the end of the year. Severance packages would begin in 2002. *AP*



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PARTNERSHIP WITH PNOC

3 foreign firms to explore for oil, gas

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AT least three foreign firms have expressed interest to explore for oil and gas in the Philippines jointly with the Philippine National Oil Co., a PNOC official said last week.

The official said in an interview that the three companies, which he described only as "Southeast Asian and non-Southeast Asian," made clear their intentions during the recent World Energy Council meeting in Argentina last month.

"The area they are mostly interested in is that between the Philippines and Malaysia," he said.

The exploration firms are also looking at the so-called corridor of opportunity near Palawan, the source added.

The areas are near the Malampaya field, where 2.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas was found apart from a recoverable oil reserve of between 35 and 50 million barrels.

The PNOC official said there were other firms who asked about exploration prospects in the Philippines, but that they—and the three firms—had yet to sit down for more serious discussions.

In a related development, new local oil industry player Eastern Petroleum Corp. is expecting to come up with a due diligence with an Indonesian partner to explore for local oil.

Eastern Petroleum is now in the middle of a viability study regarding prospect areas, which have been previously explored, company chair Fernando Martinez said.

"We expect to agree on investing on the project in about three months," Martinez told the Inquirer.

The firms will decide only when they are satisfied with the results of the study, stressing that oil exploration was a very risky business, he said.

"The results of the study would let us know whether, for instance, we need to invest $5 million or $20 million, or whether this would simply be not enough" Martinez said.

He explained that PNOC was targeting areas like Southwest Palawan, where previous exploration activities had been done.

"The original prospectors had abandoned the areas for various reasons. Some backed out due to financing problems," he said.

Martinez said the scope of the partnership was still open-ended, but it would either be a joint venture or a technical cooperation.

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BSP cuts by half risk-weight of LGU bonds

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE CENTRAL bank's policy-making Monetary Board has reduced by half to 50 percent the risk-weight of bonds issued by local government units.

"Risk-weight" is a criterion used by banks to determine how much capital they must provide to cover loans that they are extending to their clients. The capital must be commensurate to risks attached to a loan. Roughly, risks refer to how fast a bank can recover the money it lends.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the Monetary Board brought down the risk-weight of bonds guaranteed by LGU Guaranty Corp. and covered by a "deed of assignment" of the budget, otherwise known as the "internal revenue allotment," or IRA.

Reyes said with the LGU Guaranty's guarantee and the IRAs, repayment was assured and risks to banks would be greatly reduced.

"The policy approval would make any LGU bonds more attractive and would encourage these local government units to tap banks for their needs," he said.

In July, the central bank implemented a new risk-based capital framework that required banks to back up loans with capital of up to 10 percent of their book value.

The capital provision varies depending on the risk associated with the loan. For instance, loans to local government units or state-owned corporations without sovereign guarantees must be backed by a full 10 percent of their risk-weighting.

Also classified as "high-risk" are loans to real estate developers, foreclosed assets and stock holdings.

Reyes said the central bank would give banks one year to comply with stricter capital adequacy rules, and that less than five banks were likely to miss the 10-percent capital adequacy ratio under the new formula in line with international standards.

The central bank said the average capital adequacy ratio of the banking system could fall by as much as a percentage point once the risks were rated.

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Destiny assures subscribers it has close ties with Star TV

By Abigail L. Ho

DESTINY Cable Inc. has assured its subscribers that it has "a very close relationship" with its program providers and that it already has done some preparations in case negotiations with any of its program providers hit a snag in the future.

"We have no problems with our content providers. We have a very close relationship with them. Both sides are always open to each other," Destiny's senior marketing manager, Richard Rodriguez, said in an interview Wednesday.

He added that, if concessions had to be made, they would try to work out the best they could get with their programmers.

However, he said the possibility of having to drop some programs in the future was not totally out of the question. Because of this, the cable television firm had already made some preparations, just in case they would have to resort to this.

"In case it happens, we're trying to prepare for it. We're already talking about it, but we haven't arrived at anything final yet. We're still discussing our business plan," Rodriguez said.

He said, however that, as much as possible, Destiny would try to keep all its current programs.

"It's good to be prepared, but we'd really like to keep our channels. It's what our subscribers want. We'll keep our channels as long as we can," he said.

Subscribers of Destiny have been wondering how long they can keep their Star TV channels following a recent row between Sky Vision Corp. and Philippine Home Cable Holdings Corp., on one hand, and program provider Star TV Asia Ltd., on the other.

Rodriguez, however, assured Destiny's existing subscribers and those who were about to migrate to their service that Destiny had a very good relationship with the Star TV group.

"We have no difficulties with them. We're supporting them also. Concessions do have to be made, but we're both open," he said.

Destiny's contract with Star TV was renewed in July this year and would last until July next year.

By June 2002, Rodriguez said Destiny would probably start negotiating for a contract renewal with Star TV again. He said the future was not really certain and there were no guarantees that the negotiations would be completely smooth.

He said Star TV might increase its rates to a level that Destiny would not be able to afford, but he said this was still too early to worry about it.

Rodriguez also expressed confidence that they would not have that much of a problem with the program provider, at least judging from their latest round of negotiations.

He disclosed that the negotiations for the July renewal this year did not even last a full month.

Destiny is a subsidiary of Solid Group Inc.

Farm output up 3%

FARM output grew by 2.94 percent from the previous year in the nine months to September, the Department of Agriculture said last week.

Gross output translates into P419.1 billion at current prices, the agriculture department said in a statement.

The sector accounts for about a fifth of the country's gross domestic product.

Crops output grew by 2.13 percent, livestock by 2.87 percent, poultry 5.07 percent and fisheries 3.5 percent, it added.

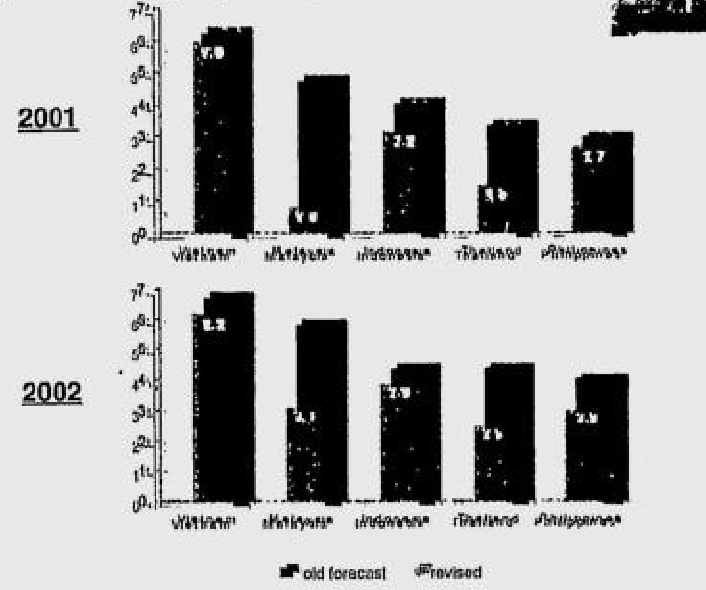
Amid a global slowdown, the Philippine government expects calendar 2001 GDP growth to ease to 3.3 percent, compared with a 3.9-percent expansion last year. *AFP*

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Revised growth forecast for SE Asia

(2001 & 2002, in percent)



Source: Asian Development Bank

AFTER the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the Asian Development Bank projected global economic recovery to begin in mid- 2002 , not late this year as earlier predicted. Southeast Asia's growth was lowered from 4 to 2.4 percent in 2001 and from 4.8 to 3.3 percent in 2002.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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Will the Global City's blueprint change?

By Doris C. Dumlao

NOW that it is imminent that Metro Pacific Corp. would give up its crown jewel, the next question is: Who will take over the 150-hectare Fort Bonifacio Global City project?

The questions do not end there. Once a new group takes over the premier property project, will the original master plan, or at least, a big bulk of it, be retained?

Or will the blueprint be substantially modified to suit the new group's vision?

Will the Philippine Stock Exchange, for instance, still be able to relocate into a unified trading structure in the Global City?

At a time when the property slump has yet to show signs of reversal, the Fort Bonifacio project is a vast project to digest.

Analysts say only a few local property developers will have the financial capability to anchor the project, and among these are the Ayala, Gokongwei and Henry Sy groups.

Of the three, only Ayala Land Inc. has shown determination, submitting last week a binding offer for the entire stake in BLC.

Unless other groups are quietly brewing something better than what ALI can offer, the group appears to be the best bet so far. It is even ready to start its due diligence on BLC.

"The binding offer of ALI is subject to the fulfillment of certain terms and conditions and the satisfactory completion of financial, technical and legal due diligence audits to be conducted by ALI and its authorized representatives," ALI vice president and comptroller Jaime Ysmael told the Philippine Stock Exchange last week.

To date, ALI has already identified allies to form a new company which will own the BLC shares, assuming it gets to bring home the bacon.

The group of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. executive Carlos Rufino and another unidentified foreign group have been asked to join the ALI-led consortium.

In 1995 when the property market was at its peak, an ALI-led consortium, which included the Bank of the Philippine Islands, was BLC's stiffest rival in a bidding war for the development rights in Fort Bonifacio.

The group even sued Bases Conversion Development Authority and the MPC-led consortium in order to get the award to MPC annulled. The ALI consortium charged that BCDA had substantially changed the rules after the bidding in order to favor the Metro Pacific consortium.

But the loss to MPC in 1995 turned out to be

WILL/ C6

JAIME Augusto Zobel de Ayala gets a second chance.

CHARLIE Rufino is to join the ALI-led consortium.

MPC Chair Manuel V. Pangilinan has to sell the crown jewel.

Manager makes sure people are motivated

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

LEIVA

GABRIEL Leiva Von Bovet came from his native Peru in October 1998 to head the operations of computer services company Unisys Philippines with mixed feelings.

Some people have warned him that Filipinos do not work hard. Filipino habits like turning off the lights at noon and eating at the desks certainly did not help to change his impression. But just three months into his job, he proved himself wrong.

"About three or four months after I came to the country, a big project came up. I tell you that my staff worked far into the night, sometimes days without getting showers just to finish the project. So I said to myself, what are they saying Filipinos don't work hard. They certainly do," Leiva says.

MANAGEMENT
STYLES

He tells Business Monday that it is simply a matter of providing the proper guidance and motivation to the employees, especially in the fast-paced information technology industry.

"People here, I believe, are motivated by belief that what they are doing will help the company and will help the country," he explains.

Motivating people

He stresses that there is no recipe that fits all in terms of motivating people. Some people, he says, are motivated to work by money, others by professional growth. Some want to work because they want to achieve something to help the community and others are also motivated by career growth, that they can see a space for them to move up in the corporate ladder.

"I think my job as head of the company here is to focus on the high potentials and my direct reports, to make sure that they are motivated, that they would want to work hard," Leiva says.

He, for instance, helped raise the morale of the people by giving them more opportunities to handle major projects. A project manager, for instance, who was handling projects worth about half a million dollars was provided new projects that were worth over $1 million.

"In this industry, many look forward to professional growth. If they feel that they can not get it here, they will just leave," he says.

Conducive environment

Aside from motivating the people, Leiva also feels responsible for creating an environment that is conducive to work. It does not only mean providing the

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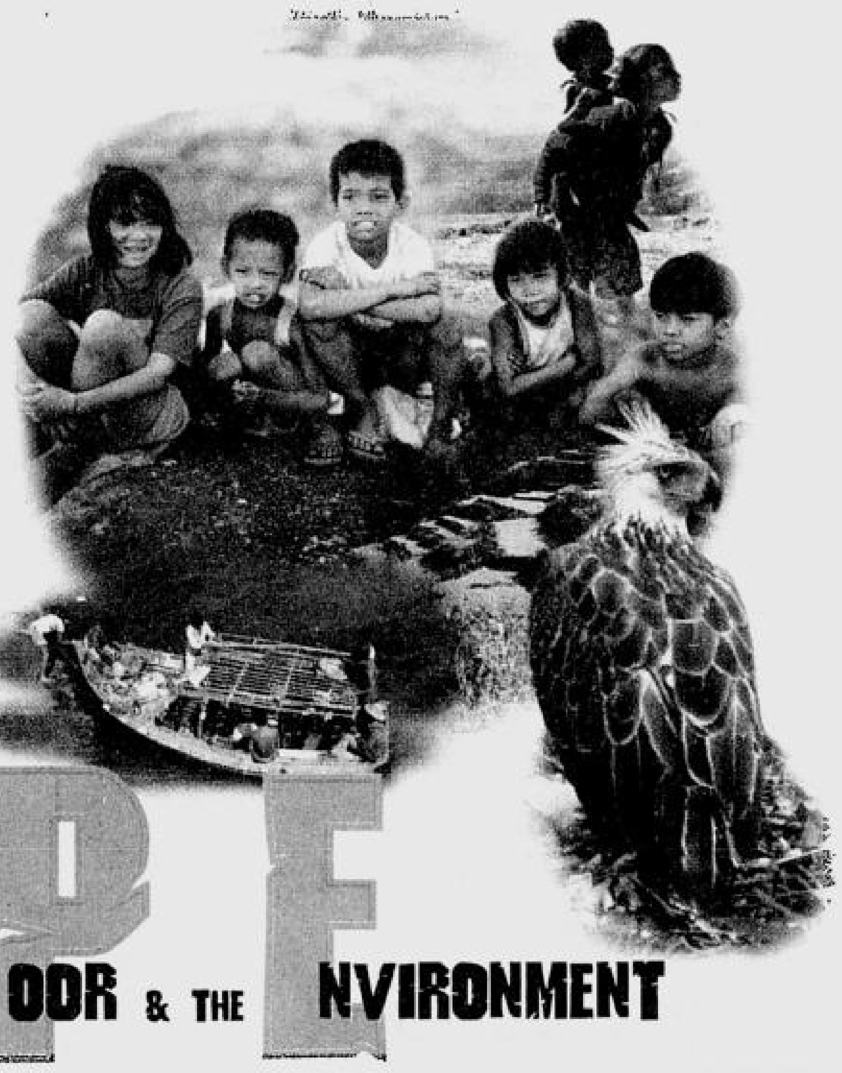

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Comelec's ₱6.5-B VRIS system: A waste of money?

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Manuel A.Alcuaz Jr.

GEORGE Balagtas of Photokina is going around trying to push the P6.5 Billion VRIS (Voters' Registration and Information System) Project. In a recent presentation to the computer industry's IT Kapihan, Balagtas made the following claims:

- Comelec awarded the VRIS contract to Photokina on Oct. 3, 2000;
- Harriett Demetriou stopped the project on Dec. 14, 2000;
- Guia Gomez does not own any shares of Photokina;
- There must be 5 million flying voters in the Philippines based on Senator Pimentel's claim of 20,000 flying voters in Cagayan de Oro;
- We in the industry should back VRIS because it is an IT project.

I will not dwell on the legality of the so-called award to Photokina because I am not a lawyer.

About Guia Gomez not having any shares in Photokina, I believe Balagtas. Gomez, I understand, is a very shrewd businesswoman. If she was indeed helping Photokina sell VRIS to Comelec, why would she invest in a company that would never again get a P6.5-billion contract?

When Balagtas extrapolated from Senator Pimentel's claimed 20,000 flying voters in Cagayan de Oro to 5 million flying voters nationwide, I really got irritated.

There are a number of possibilities flowing out of that statement:

(1) Balagtas thought he was addressing people who would take his figures as Gospel truth; and

(2) The people at Photokina are so naïve that they extrapolate without considering that Senator Pimentel may just be guessing, and assuming there were flying voters in Cagayan de Oro, would there be the same proportion in the entire country?

And lastly, the real IT professionals in the Philippines do not support projects because they use IT. Real IT professionals believe that IT should be used where it produces real benefits and where IT is cost-effective.

We should start looking at the Photokina VRIS project by defining the objectives and how computerization can help in the attainment of the objective.

Comelec's mission and primary objective is to conduct fair, honest, efficient and voter-friendly elections. Computerization can help in the registration of voters, in the counting and canvassing of votes.

VRIS is only involved in the registration of voters. The VRIS project only covers the cleansing of voters' list and issuance of voters card. It does not even include precinct mapping.

For P6.5 Billion, what is VRIS' contribution to making elections more clean and honest?

If VRIS is successfully implemented, its main benefit is that a prospective voter can be registered only once. VRIS technology (more on that later) will presumably catch anyone trying to register more than once through his fingerprint.

That is fine and dandy. But there is a simpler and less expensive method. And that is by simply making voters dip their fingers in ink, which will not be easily washed off, as suggested by Joe Concepcion and Gus Lagman.

Having deflated the value of VRIS in preventing flying voters, we will now analyze how the VRIS project was engineered to become a P6.5-billion mega project.

Many of the huge IT projects that the government has gone into, have not been initiated by key IT professionals or companies. These have been initiated by promoters outside the industry.

The trick to corner a mega project is to inject a technology that you have an edge on which others don't. It does not matter whether it will make the project less cost-effective.

The one-two punch to win these projects was to have a strong backer with the ability to push the project at the highest levels and to inject technical requirements that would make it difficult or expensive for others to compete.

Photokina's backer was rumored to be Guia Gomez. They deny it. Its technical ace was "biometrics" which Luz Tancangco insisted to be a mandatory requirement.

The simpler way to make sure that the registered voter is the one who picks up the ballot is through a picture. When you register, your picture is taken. One copy is on the precinct list, the other is on the voters' ID.

But Tancangco's Committee insisted on "biometrics." They did not consult with the industry.

According to the Photokina people, fingerprint biometrics can make sure that no one can register twice.

There are two problems, which they may have failed to consider. There is a possibility that the computer may mistake two very similar but different fingerprints to be the same.

The Photokina people, however, claimed that their fingerprint biometrics is 98.5-percent accurate. That means a possibility of 1+.5 percent error. Out of 35 million registrants, that is 525,000 possible errors!

There are cheaper and more effective ways of cleaning the voters list. One way would be to print the voters list and post it at the Barangay Center, where residents can spot non-local voters. Make voters IDs with pictures. This was proposed long ago but it never materialized due to lack of funds.

How did the P6.5-billion VRIS take off? Some naughty people say it was due to strong backing.

The Comelec needs IT. But the priority should be in automating precinct counting and canvassing. That's where part of the P6.5 billion should be spent. This will make it possible for our poor school teachers to go home before 8 p.m. It will also make it possible to have final results in a few days, instead of weeks.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author who is a member of Management Association of the Philippines, president of Systems Sciences Consult Inc. and member of the Board of Trustees of De La Salle University Professional Schools Inc. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com.ph.)

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MOVEMENTS

New directors for Citibank

FONACIER

CITIBANK N.A. recently announced new appointments for its global consumer banking business.

Cecille Fonacier is the new marketing director beginning Oct. 1, 2001. She will oversee marketing activities for Citibank's full range of credit card and consumer banking products. Her depth of marketing expertise stems from her numerous experiences in the bank for the last eight years and in other marketing-oriented industries—J. Walter Thompson, Ogilvy & Mather and American Express.

Hory Aycardo is the new senior corporate operating officer effective Oct. 15, 2001. Prior to this new appointment, Aycardo was Citibank's country technology head overseeing the bank's various businesses including consumer bank. A Citibank veteran for 16 years, Aycardo has worked in various positions and most recently headed the Asia-Pacific support center.

Before he joined Citibank, Aycardo was with IBM Philippines where he worked in systems engineering and marketing for seven years.

ICTSI names new assistant managers

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) recently announced the appointments of new assistant mangers for engineering, management information systems (MIS) and public relations.

ICTSI named Ireneo D. Frilles as engineering assistant manager, Berlin O. Samonte as MIS assistant manager and Jupiter K.L. Kalambakal as public relations assistant manager.

Frilles is tasked with assisting the engineering manager in planning, organizing, leading and monitoring the effective implementation of preventive maintenance for heavy equipment and support services for the Manila International Container Terminal. Sections under his supervision include mobile equipment, crane maintenance, facilities maintenance, materials management and power plant.

Frilles joined ICTSI in August 1991 as junior engineer at the Crane Maintenance Section (CMS). Since then, he was named team administrator before being promoted to superintendent in March 2000.

Before joining ICTSI, he was project coordinator for Takeda Engineering, an authorized subcontractor of Concepcion Industries Inc. He graduated from the Adamson University with a degree in Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

Samonte was promoted from information technology officer. He is tasked to provide management and other personnel with up-to-date information through a carefully designed, well-implemented specific data processing system as well as the maintenance of smooth workflows in the retrieval of data through constant coordination and supervision of the MIS staff.

Kalambakal brings to ICTSI five years of media and public relations experience. A 1997 Bachelor of Arts in Journalism graduate of the University of Santo Tomas, he began his career as a reporter for Malaya, covering the Senate and Commission on Elections.

Fraser International appoints GM

FRASER Serviced Residences International (Singapore) chair of the board, Choe Peng Sum, recently announced the appointment of Carlo Gomez as general manager of soon-to-open Fraser Place Serviced Residences, a twin-tower property development on Valero St. in Salcedo Village, Makati City.

Fraser Place will officially open in February 2002 to offer first-rate residential service to business executives and travelers with its 42- and 31-story twin towers.

Gomez's career in hotel management spans almost three decades, highlighted by commendable stints in various organizations both here and abroad. Aside from holding top management positions in local hotels, Gomez has also occupied vital posts in hotels around Asia and the United States.

His distinguished work experience includes top level positions in Aston International Hotels and Resorts in Jakarta, Indonesia; The Mandarin Hotel in Jakarta; Novotel Bangna in Pravet, Bangkok, Thailand; The Manila Hotel International Co., Ltd.; The Montien Hotels in Bangkok and Pattaya, Thailand; The Excelsior, Causeway Bay in Hong Kong; Century Park Sheraton Manila; and Hyatt Embarcadero in San Francisco, California, USA. Gomez has a Master in Business Management (MBM) degree from the Asian Institute of Management, Philippines, and obtained a Master in Professional Studies (MPS) in Hotel Administration from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA.

Dell has new country manager

DELL, one of the world's leading direct provider of computer systems and services, has appointed Ireen Go Catane as its new country manager for the market.

Catane will assume overall management responsibilities for Dell's business in the Philippines and will report directly to Jimmy Yam, managing director of Dell Asia Pacific.

Catane, who holds a Bachelor of Science degree, major in Computer Technology, comes to Dell from Hewlett-Packard Philippines where she was country manager for the commercial customer business.

During her tenure there, and prior to that at Kodak and Digital Equipment, Catane has accumulated extensive experience in sales and marketing, channel business operations and business development.

Dell is ranked 48 on the Fortune 500. It designs, manufacturers and customizes products and services to customer requirements, and offers an extensive selection of software and peripherals.

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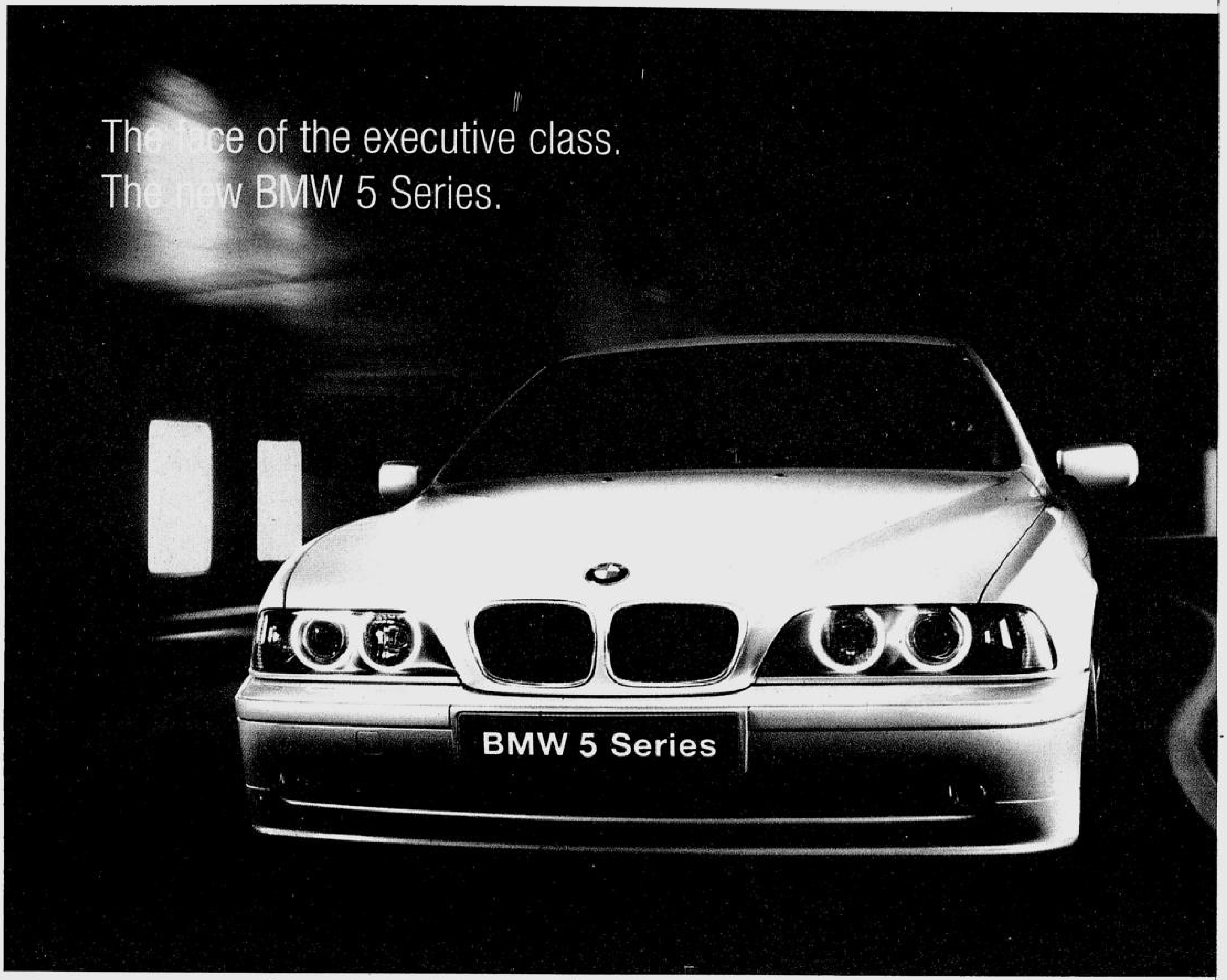

* The BMW 5 has been voted "Chefauto 2001" by Germany's magazine Impulse, 09/01. ** The BMW 5 Series touring has been voted "Company car of the year" by Germany's magazine Firmenauto in the category of "Premium Class Kombis", 07/01.

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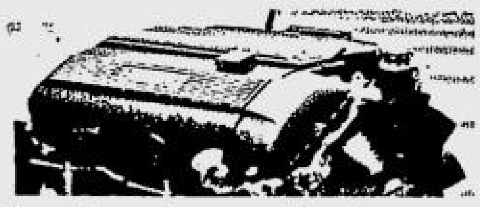

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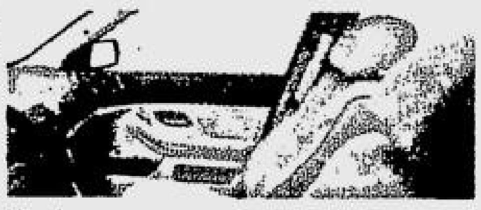

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Hiring and training your workers

BY MYRNA R. CO
UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries

GOING INTO BUSINESS

BEFORE you start hiring employees, it is important to know your manpower requirements. After determining exactly the kind and the number of people you need to hire, as well as their qualifications, you can go ahead with the hiring process.

Recruiting personnel

The first thing to do is to let the word out that you are in need of people to work for you. There are many ways to do this. You can:

- Place "help wanted" advertisements in the newspapers.
- Display "help wanted" signs prominently outside your factory or office and in other public places like *barangay* halls, municipal halls, etc.
- Check with placement units of schools and personnel offices of other companies. Most universities have placement programs for graduating students as well as new graduates.
- Check with employment agencies.
- Ask employees, customers, suppliers and acquaintances for people they know who may qualify.

Other means. In some small parishes, lectors announce job openings in the community during Sunday mass. Try also transit advertising: signs posted on exteriors of jeepneys and tricycles.

Selecting personnel

After spreading the word around that you want to take in people, applications will start to come in. Usually, there will be more applicants than jobs or vacancies available. Thus, you need to select those whom to hire from among a number of applicants.

There are various tools you can use to make sure you choose the best candidate for a certain job. These tools include:

The application form—which covers an applicant's personal data (age, civil status, number of children, etc.), education, training, work experience, skills, etc.

The interview—which is done in order to get indicators regarding an applicant's personality, work attitudes, and communication and other skills.

Written tests—which may include an IQ test and aptitude tests on various aspects, including numerical reasoning, verbal reasoning, abstract intelligence, sales aptitude, etc.

Practical tests—which are used for measuring manual dexterity and technical proficiency. Typing and computing tests fall under this type of tools.

Reference checks—which are used to get statements from a previous employer, teacher or other authority regarding an applicant's character, and work and academic performance.

Medical examinations—which you may require to insure that the employee you are hiring is physically fit for the work you want him or her to do.

When taking in an employee, you will need to ask the following from your new hire: barangay clearance, NBI and police clearances, and SSS number if already registered. If not, you will have to see to it that he or she gets registered. You may also wish to look at an applicant's diploma and transcript of school records.

Training personnel

Once you have hired a person for employment, chances are you will still need to train him. Don't overlook the importance of training. You cannot expect even an experienced worker to do a job exactly the way you want it done.

For example, if you hired an experienced sewer for your garment firm, you might need to train her to sew using a specific design, pattern, sequence or material. Possibly, too, there are other skills you need which she has not yet developed.

For example, you might expect her to operate a heavy-duty sewing machine in your factory when her experience is limited to an ordinary machine.

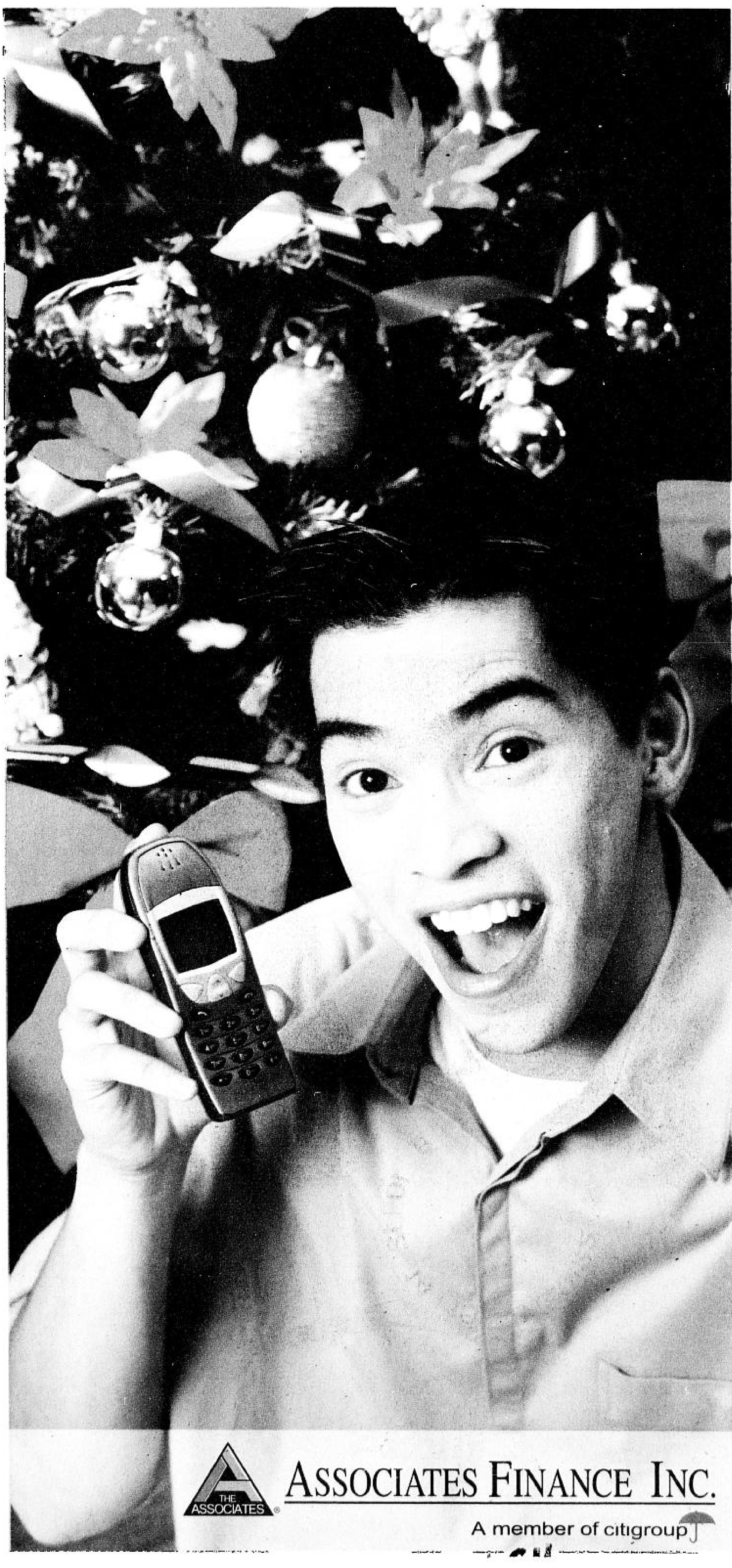
These new skills, knowledge and other information are imparted to the new employee through training and development. In fact, even old employees need further training over time.

Often in a small enterprise, the preferred method of developing technical skills among employees is on-the-job training. Coached by supervisors, managers or an older and more experienced worker, the trainee learns by doing at the workplace.

On-the-job training is directly related to the employee's job; and only specific, job related knowledge and skills are transferred. It can be tailor-made to fit the individual training needs of employees, taking into account their experience and level of competence.

In this type of training, the employee produces while learning and gaining experiences.

(Growing enterprises might want to know what it takes to enter and compete in global markets. Please check out the UP ISSI's training on "SMEs Going Global," which will begin on Nov. 26, by calling Celia Pascual at 926-6376.)



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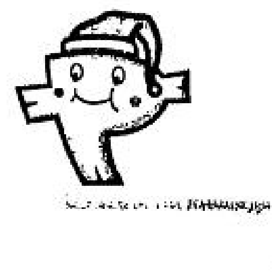

GM's job . . .

(From page C1)

right tools such as personal computers and other facilities, but more importantly, it means putting together the right teams to handle major projects.

"The easy part is to provide the basic tools such as a notebook or a personal computer. The tougher part is providing the human environment that will make the people productive," he says.

Leiva says communication skills then become very important for him because he has to oversee three different Unisys offices here. He says he has to make sure that the staff at the satellite offices continues to feel that they are part of the company.

"I try to do this by conducting quarterly employee meetings because people need to know where the company is going and how they can help the company achieve these goals. It is also important for me to provide the proper recognition to people who do a good job," Leiva says.

He, however, stresses that he does not always have to wait for these quarterly or annual meets to provide recognition. He says that a daily pat on the back certainly achieves something more than an award at the end of the year.

"It is also my challenge to make sure that the people down the line also recognize their people because I cannot do it myself. I feel it is my responsibility to coach the people down the organization to do this too," he says.

Friday outings

On a lighter note, Leiva says Unisys also feels it is important to be involved with its employees even after work. It is again part of his programs to provide a good working environment.

Unisys has even set up a committee dedicated to putting together programs and events for the employees that are not work-related.

Every last Friday of the month, for example, the reception area at the Unisys office, is converted into a bar where the employees can get their drinks and participate in videoke singing.

Leiva says he grabs the chance to talk and meet employees during these Friday night outings. He says he cannot sing, but like most Latin Americans, he can dance the salsa.

Other projects involve community work at Tagaytay where Unisys people help build homes, and a savings and loan cooperative for the employees.

Leiva says he participates as much as he can in employees' activities both at work and outside because he discovered that his staff at Unisys appreciate the presence of the boss.

"The staff is comforted by the feeling that the general manager can make a quick decision especially in these tough times. I would like to believe that I can make those decisions even based on limited information," he says.

International exposure

This attitude has helped Unisys increase its business by three times since he took over, both in terms of new businesses or new contracts signed and in actual revenues.

Unisys is one of the oldest information technology companies in the Philippines, with projects mostly with the government. It has provided computer services for the Bureau of Customs, the document management system at the Social Security System and the computerization of the Land Transportation Authority.

It has also won the contract to facilitate the processing of the National Statistics Office documents, which would enable citizens to get their documents within 30 minutes, instead of four days.

Unisys is the only multinational IT company so far that has invested in build-operate-transfer projects involving information technology.

"I believe that we have managed to create the basis for our future," he says.

Leiva says he developed his management style from working and studying in different parts of the world, giving him the ability to work and deal with different cultures.

Leiva was born in Peru, studied there and finished college in Lima. He then went to the Wilhelm Pieck University in Rostock, Germany where he got his Master's degree in Naval Engineering and then a doctorate in engineering where he graduated magna cum laude.

He then worked in Lima and then in Canada and eventually in the Philippines, which means he has lived abroad for 18 years and still counting.

"There are some differences to managing companies in different parts of the world but the main recipe is always the same. Always look for opportunities in whatever country you are in," Leiva says.

BUENAVENTURA expects leasing to be good next year.

To lease or not to lease

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

THE BULK of Filipino businesses are small enterprises or those with assets of P30 million and below.

Majority of these small ventures have capitalization of less than P5 million and this segment is the one which has the least access to financing. Banks tend to be biased toward big businesses.

No matter how much they trumpet their developmental role in the country's economy, the fact is that banks prefer to lend their money to those who actually have money already. Their rationale is that the cost of processing and servicing a P100-million loan is the same as the cost of processing a P1-million loan. The returns from a bigger loan, however, are much higher.

But banks must have realized there is still money to be made from small businesses, thus, they went into lease financing as an alternative for SMEs.

"Leasing is sometimes called a loan disguised as a lease," says PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. president and CEO Rene J. Buenaventura.

PCI Leasing is a subsidiary of Equitable PCI Bank, where Buenaventura, a nephew of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura, is a senior vice president heading retail banking.

In incurring a loan, the borrower has no option but to return the item he bought at the end of the repayment period. Under a lease, the borrower can return the item to the bank.

A lease also provides a tax reprieve for the borrower as lease rentals are tax deductible.

Under a lease agreement, a firm that wants to purchase equipment puts up a down payment of about 20 percent, instead of the usual 30 percent sought under a loan agreement.

In effect, the equipment is owned by the leasing company, thus, it holds the papers. The documents are turned over to the lessor only after the lease has been fully paid.

While banks are struggling with their bad loans, most leasing firms appear to be doing well.

Leasing provides a starting businessman with the money to invest in capital.

Buenaventura however points out an interesting fact about leasing—rural folks are averse to the scheme.

"Our cultural trait works against leasing. In the provinces, it is a matter of price whether you own the unit or not. There is also fear that they will not get the equipment after they have paid for it," he explains.

They are still working on this idea to be able to increase their market outside of Metro Manila.

Buenaventura says PCI Leasing's portfolio growth of 7 percent last year was due to its financing line to local entrepreneurs.

PCI Leasing posted receivables last year of P3.2 billion, 18 .5 percent of which were accounted for by local entrepreneurs.

Growth is expected to continue this year as several sectors remain on the growth path.

Buenaventura says they have seen increased applications for the purchase of kitchen equipment for restaurants, purchase of medical equipment, trading, services and manufacturing.

The leasing firm usually gets its clients from its mother bank that refers some of their clients to the subsidiary.

To market their services, they have tapped industry associations to present the leasing option.

"We are expecting leasing to be good next year. There are certain niches in the market that withstand the crisis. Also we are influenced by the fact that we deal with SMEs rather than professional companies," he says.

PCI Leasing is the country's largest leasing and financing company in terms of capitalization, income and branch network.

Its services include direct lease, sale and leaseback, amortized commercial loans, receivable discounting, installment paper purchase, factoring of receivables and personal loans.

The country's four biggest leasing firms are PCI Leasing, Orix-Metrobank Leasing, UCPB Leasing and BPI Leasing.

For CEOs, it pays to keep information

MANY chief executives go about their everyday routine living in an ivory tower. They do not know what is going on in the organization, relying solely on what his or her managers are saying before they make their decisions.

This attitude is potentially dangerous because he or she may be the last to know about insiders stealing crucial information to the competition, thus, losing out on moneymaking opportunities.

He may also not get the right kind of information on time before he makes a landmark decision.

Business Profiles Inc., a company engaged in providing corporate security, among others, lists here some tips that executives may find useful to make sure that crucial information is not leaked out, or at least minimize the risks of it happening.

1. Develop your own sources/ information network in your company discreetly.

2. Don't rely on only one source of information. Look for other sources, and check information yourself. Consider other aspects that could have been overlooked.

3. The higher you go up the corporate ladder, the farther you get from ground level information. Take the time to look around and know your environment. It is easier to retain something seen than heard, same with understanding.

4. Take the time to know other sectors and other problems of other companies. Learn from their mistakes (losses, incidents, etc.).

5. Security is not about muscles in the information age. It is about information and making them secure. Be aware of your documents, computer systems, phones and your employees.

6. Information is power; in the wrong hands, it could only mean losses to the company.

7. Recruitment is not a simple task. Many companies refuse to divulge information about their employees even if the employee was found to have committed fraudulent acts. A lot of companies prefer not to prosecute and just release them. Records are not what they always state.

8. Take the time to interview new personnel/ staff who will occupy key positions in your office even if the human resource department has completed its work.

9. Always ask about the previous employment and track record. Do not take the information dished out as is. Verify all information provided.

10. Read their body language. Take note when their voices waver, when they hesitated, what they emphasized, when they sounded unsure. Listen to both verbal and nonverbal cues.

11. Familiarize yourself or get some training on the techniques of questioning, modus operandi: losses on information, extracting information. Get yourself informed.

Are asset management firms heroes or heels?

By Raul C. Dancel

ARE asset management companies heroes or heels? There seems to be a great deal of debate as to how effective AMCs will be in solving the worsening bad-debts problem of the banking sector.

While the government regards these companies as "saviors," not a few are critical.

The government believes that while AMCs do not offer a shotgun solution to the banking sector's growing bad-loans problem, they at least offer some form of relief that may improve the situation.

The country's 45 biggest banks are carrying over P245 billion worth of bad loans. That's no small change, and the central bank is anxious to trim this amount before the problem goes out of hand and take down the entire industry.

"It (the NPL or non-performing loan ratio) may be under severe pressure (and may) even go up further as you look at the prospects of the world economy," Bankers Association of the Philippines executive director Leonilo Coronel said.

Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., the country's largest, has said that its NPL ratio has risen to 17.21 percent as of Sept. 21 from 16.10 percent as of June 22.

The second largest, the Bank of the Philippine Islands, a unit of conglomerate Ayala Corp., said its NPL ratio stood at 14.31 percent as of Sept. 21, only slightly better than 14.5 percent as of June 22.

Good credits gone bad

"I think the worry is you are seeing some (top-class) companies that are beginning to call for some debt restructuring, debt relief," BAP's Coronel said.

The Philippines' largest vehicle battery maker, Ramcar, has started debt restructuring talks with its 16 creditors this week, sending tremors through the banking industry. The company owes P8 billion to local banks.

"It's a bit worrisome that some good credits are beginning to feel the pinch, and we don't even know if the economies in the West would recover, and a lot of our industries are dependent upon these countries," Coronel said.

Starting somewhere

A bill to establish asset management companies which would act as vehicles for disposing non-performing assets has been filed with the Congress, and BAP's Coronel said bankers would likely meet soon to come up with proposals for amendments.

"There are a couple of things we would like to suggest. In fact, that is the topic of our meeting sometime this week so that we can (come up with a) more responsive framework," he said.

Equitable PCI Bank Inc., the country's third largest bank, and Metrobank have been considering establishing asset management firms, while BPI said that it was coming up with a marketing strategy soon to aggressively sell its foreclosed assets.

"Don't think that we haven't been selling foreclosed assets. The position of the bank would be more aggressive selling compared with previous years," a BPI official said.

THE PHILIPPINE National Bank is just one of the country's largest banks that are saddled with idle assets.

While the soft property market and poor investment environment are not conducive to disposal of bad loans, Coronel said banks have to start somewhere.

"That is normally the case, when it rains, it pours. Still you have to take a look at what can be done or at least plant the seeds today," he said.

Non-believer

One non-believer in AMCs is real estate marketer Property Forum.

For Property Forum, banks do not need an AMC to turn their non-performing loans into liquid assets. What they instead require is an "asset sales pool" program.

Property Forum believes that banks don't have to immediately assign foreclosed properties and non-performing assets to an AMC. They may instead "pool" these assets and assign it to a company that can dispose of them through a number of ways.

An "asset sales pool" program calls for the consolidation of pre-approved real estate assets that their owners want to dispose of through a "focused" and "networked" company—an asset sales pool management company.

An asset sales pool management company inspects and assigns values to selected properties. Specific financing terms are given for each property with easy entry values. These properties are sold actively through public auctions, electronic sales systems and other various ways.

No cutthroat rates

One attraction that an asset sales pool program holds is that it doesn't carry the cutthroat rates of AMCs.

Most AMCs are foreign banks or institutions that acquire bad loans of distressed local banks at an 80-percent discount. This means that for P1 million worth of non-performing loans they acquire, AMCs pay a bank only P200,000.

They keep the rest for themselves.

"The pricing is really unreasonable," United Coconut Planters Bank vice president Jaime Jacinto said.

An asset sales pool management company can sell bad loans and assets at a discount of only 30 percent, giving banks 40 percent more from its non-performing assets.

"The asset sales pool management company would ensure that the asset for sale is really at its marketable quality, selling it at only 30-percent off its original selling values is achievable," Property Forum said.

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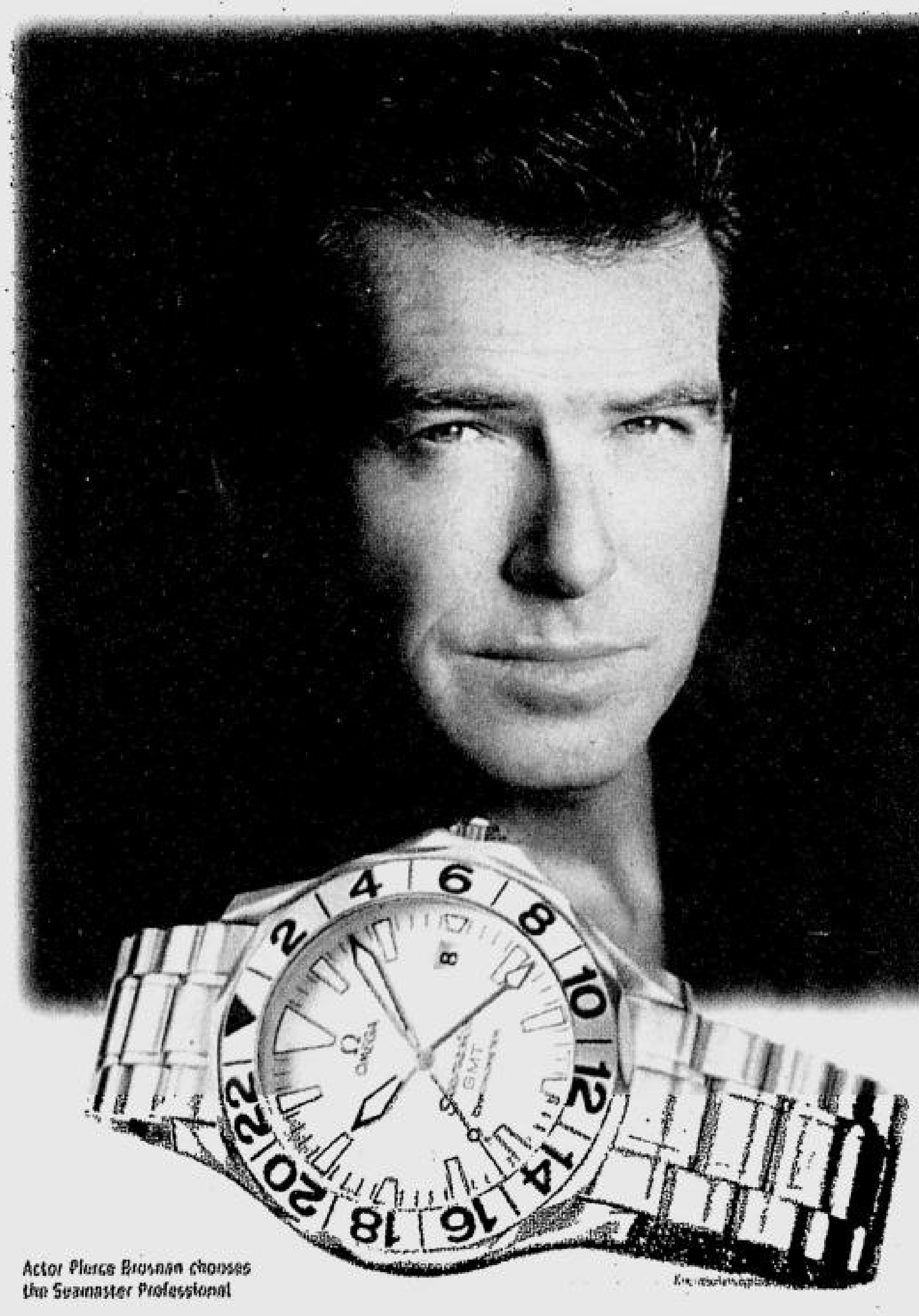

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Survival guide for executive search bets

IF and when an executive search contacts you, you must know your rights and be aware of expectations during the process. As a potential search candidate, you are entitled to ask questions regarding the search process and to have them answered.

Executive search consultants are supposed to "hunt" and provide qualified candidates to fill senior-level positions, according to Susan Nicholls, chief operating officer of Boyden Global Executive Search Inc. (Manila).

Although the contract is between the search firm and the client, search consultants also build professional and ethical relationships with candidates, Nicholls says.

After all, both consultant and candidate may remain in contact over a period of years.

Nicholls emphasizes that the most successful executive search is a three-way partnership. In this way, the candidate, the search firm and the client fully understand their rights, duties and obligations during the entire search process.

Nicholls represents Boyden, one of the world's largest executive search firms. It has been in operation for over 50 years, in 50 offices spread across 30 countries.

Nicholls outlines the following "rights" of search candidates:

Confidentiality—You have the right to authorize and limit the information you give the search consultant, which is made up essentially of your name and career record.

Full disclosure—You have the right to know from the search consultant about the position and the client organization. But you must understand that the search company will not divulge the name of the client at the outset.

Timely communication—You are entitled to know the status of the search process in a timely manner, every step of the way. You also are entitled to timely answers to your questions from the consultant.

Adequate process details—You are entitled to know what to expect as the process unfolds. At any stage of the proceedings, you should be able to ask:

- How long will this take?
- Who do I have to meet with before a decision is made?
- What time frame is the client working on?
- What is the next step?

Feedback—You are entitled to get an honest appraisal about where you will fit and where you don't.

Professional treatment—The candidate is entitled to a high level of professionalism from the consultant who is expected to comply with all the employment laws related to the normal hiring process.

Respect for your time and position—As a senior level executive, your current position demands your full time and attention. So when scheduling appointments and interviews, you will expect your search consultant and the client to demonstrate utmost respect for your time, position and responsibilities to your employer.

Aside from your rights, be aware of the expectations of the parties involved in the search—such as the following:

Consistency between the search firm and its client—The search consultant and the client are expected to do their best to be on the same wavelength in terms of the information they present to you.

No pressure—The best executive search placement process is expected to give the candidate enough time to make a measured, well thought out decision, without undue pressure from the search consultant for you to accept the offer.

A trusting relationship—The search consultant's conduct befitting a trustworthy professional is expected to develop an open and trusting relationship among the parties.

SUSAN Nicholls: three-way partnership.

Nicholls adds that, as a candidate, the more you know about the executive search process the better you can position yourself when you get a call from a search agency.

Remember that the most successful executive search involves those where you, the search consultant and the client know your rights, obligations and expectations from the search process.

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XTO A/T	773,000	106,660	31,036	22,237	386,500	12,222	8,891
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Will the Global City's blueprint change?

(From page C1)

a blessing in disguise for the Ayalas as what followed next was a reversal of the property market because of the Asian currency turmoil of 1997.

ALI now has a second chance at getting the Fort Bonifacio project, and obviously, at a good discount since property prices have hit rock-bottom.

The MPC consortium acquired its development rights at a price of over P33,000 per square meter. ALI earlier offered P11,800 for an 18.9-hectare portion, but this was rejected. Industry sources said that ALI was willing to improve its offer to over P20,000-per-square-meter level.

Observers noted ALI is keen on Fort Bonifacio because it is a strategic fit to its own premier development in Makati.

The project will also enhance ALI's portfolio as the group is running out of land banking within the greater Metro Manila area, with the nearest assets already far south in Laguna.

The Gokongwei group is also in a position to take over the project. Robinsons Land Corp. has submitted an offer, although a non-binding one. RLC's parent company, JG Summit, enjoys a cash hoard of P19 billion, almost half its current assets of P40 billion.

One possibility is for the Gokongwei group to bring in as partner Singaporean conglomerate United Industrial Corp. (UIC), where it holds a 24.3-percent stake.

UIC owns majority of Singapore Land Inc., the oldest property firm in Singapore.

Retail tycoon Henry Sy was also among those invited to bid for the project. However, his group had already indicated that they would prefer to concentrate on expanding their mall empire in the country.

The taipan is also busy with other big projects, such as the Mall of Asia along Roxas Boulevard. The opening of the mall, planned to be the biggest in Asia, has been deferred to 2005 from the original schedule of 2003.

Sy is also busy with Highlands Prime, a spin-off unit of Belle Corp. which will continue the development of leisure estate Tagaytay Highlands.

"I don't think we put in our bid," SM Prime Holdings Inc. EVP Teresita Sy-Coson said.

Tycoon Andrew Tan's Megaworld Corp. is also interested in Fort Bonifacio, but only on strategic portions of the property and not on the entire stake in BLC.

Megaworld investor relations officer Luke Tan said the group has yet to submit an offer but would look at strategic areas in the project by next year.

Bidding

Dutch Bank ING Barings, which has been tapped as MPC's financial adviser for BLC, has mapped out an unconventional bidding process. It sent feelers to different groups which might be interested to bid for the stake in BLC, and started separate negotiations with them.

No floor price was set and any creative offer was welcome.

MPC is bound to make a decision in the next few days. Hong Kong-based parent company First Pacific Co. Ltd. is demanding concrete results. Selling out at a loss is a foregone conclusion, but the task is to minimize the haircut. There were previous rumors that First Pacific was keen on selling MPC itself, not just BLC, but this has been denied. Even assuming that there was such intention, analysts agree that First Pacific's best option was to sell BLC as debt-ridden MPC won't likely attract interest.

Once MPC divests from BLC, it will have enough cash to wipe out around P18 billion in consolidated debts and embark on a clean slate.

Expectations that a deal with ALI would be finalized soon boosted MPC's share prices last week.

PSE's jitters

For its part, the PSE is certainly one party which is jittery on the MPC issue. It was in the thick of renegotiating a deed of donation with the FBDC, and officials were surprised to read in the newspapers that MPC was planning to sell its stake in BLC.

FBDC had asked for a longer time to complete the PSE's future headquarters and unified trading floor in the Global City. But should a new deal be forged, a PSE director said there was no assurance that whoever would buy the stake in BLC would again renegotiate. Under existing laws, the buyer would have to honor existing obligations.

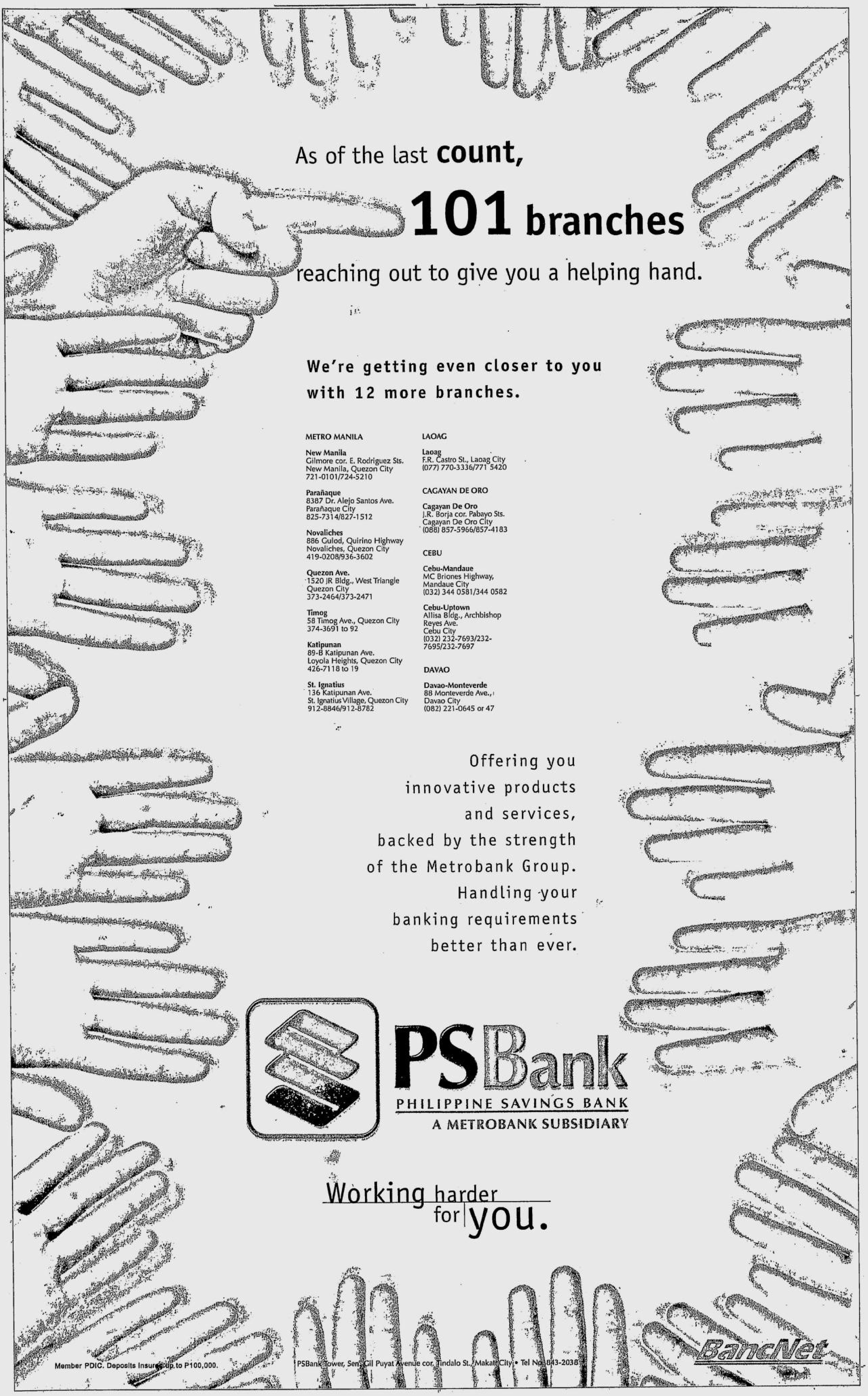
ALI, the apparent top-runner in the bidding, was much opposed to PSE's relocation to Fort Bonifacio in 1999, as this would adversely affect the twin-towers it had earlier donated to the bourse. ALI had simply proposed to consolidate the trading floors in the Ayala triangle.

"But I hope that if Ayala gets the Fort Bonifacio, they would want the PSE there as well," the director said.

Under the new offer, FBDC would earmark a floor area of 12,000 square meters and transfer the building within 10 years after a new deal has been signed (as against the 2004 target under the original agreement).

PSE, in turn, is required to occupy the area and use it as the principal headquarters and main trading floor for a period of at least five years after occupancy.

In any case, the Fort Bonifacio issue, which was central to a proxy war that nearly erupted in the bourse and caused Ramon T. Garcia to be a lame-duck PSE president, continues to be an unfolding saga which brings excitement to the sluggish stock market.



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LEADERSHIP is the one factor that is critical to business success. Without it, there can be no clear vision and opportunities will be squandered. Without it, resources will be wasted and a workforce's full potential will remain woefully untapped.

Leadership is not, however, a phenomenon that develops magically on its own. It must be deliberately cultivated. This point is not lost on senior executives who, in Watson Wyatt's 1997 global survey, cited leadership development as the single most important human resource issue facing their company in the second half of the 1990s.

But the fact that firms fail to perform to their potential suggests that it's much easier to talk about developing leaders than to accomplish it.

To learn what leadership entails—and how to improve it—interviews were conducted with CEOs at 75 of the world's premier global companies. Based on information from these interviews, Watson Wyatt developed a survey questionnaire, which was completed by 1,057 top executives in 18 countries around the world.

By identifying common characteristics of leading CEOs and their companies and by defining the factors most likely to predict business success, we can demonstrate how leaders must think, act and mobilize people to succeed in the 21st century.

Organizational challenge

The largely similar views expressed by executives around the world about leadership suggest that companies will benefit from crafting consistent leadership development efforts on a global scale. Interestingly though, the items they rated as most important for creating high-performance global organizations are the very same ones they feel need the most improvement.

Top executives indicated that establishing formal leadership development programs at all levels is the most important priority, followed by providing job skills training for employees, building multicultural business teams, ensuring that senior executives have multicultural experience and designing recruiting efforts to specifically support the business plan.

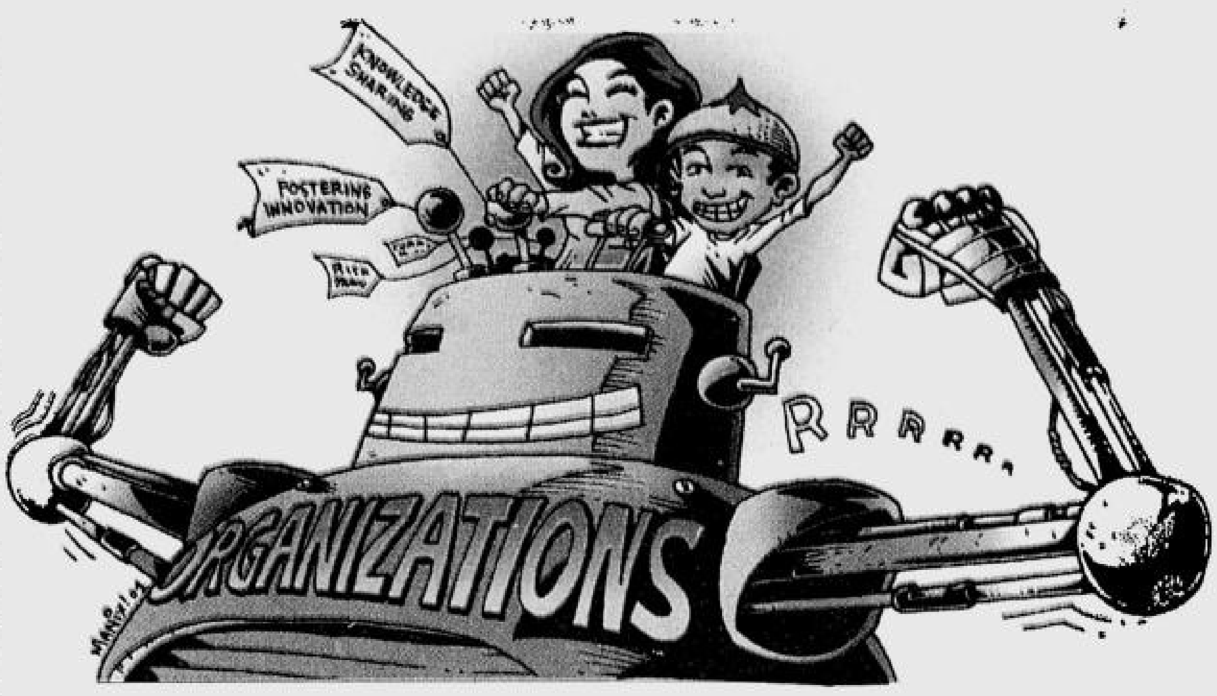
Regional findings indicate, however, that North American executives place less emphasis on multi-cultural experience. As revealed in the study, multi-cultural experience is significantly correlated with good financial performance.

It is possible then that some organizations may be missing out on opportunities to more fully develop the capabilities and effectiveness of their leaders in an increasingly global business environment.

Process and programs

Top executives place nearly identical importance on three of four organizational leadership priorities. These are encouraging innovation and risk-taking, developing and communicating a global vision and sharing knowledge throughout the organization.

Linking pay with performance is their least important priority. They report that the areas of greatest challenge are fostering innovation and knowledge sharing.



Our research suggests though that Asian executives place considerably less emphasis on knowledge sharing and more on fostering innovations. By contrast, European executives show the most interest in knowledge sharing and place the least important on linking pay with performance.

As far as the marketplace customers, the CEOs feel that customer satisfaction is by far the most important among marketplace issues. The second area of emphasis concerns the need to transform the global corporate vision into effective business strategies.

The regional breakouts show a good degree of uniformity. Two interesting exceptions were answers from the Asian executives. By a considerable margin, they believe in the importance of instilling a "beat the competition" mindset in their workforce. At the same time, Asian executives assign less importance to translating vision into business strategy.

Personal traits

Addressing leadership at the individual level, the survey focused on three dimensions: personal leadership qualities, influencing others, and mobilizing people.

According to those surveyed there seems to be no substitute for the hard work of demonstrating through actions rather than mere words which personal leadership qualities are needed for organizational success.

Respondents believe that the leaders themselves must exhibit the work habits, attitudes and priorities they expect of their subordinates if their leadership is to be most effecting.

Exhibiting confidence in an increasingly uncertain world is the second most frequently noted personal leadership quality.

This dimension of the survey uncovered the largest response disparity at the regional level. It appears that the personal leadership qualities executives model and look for when recruiting will vary widely across regions.

Leaders inevitably need to act as teachers, coaches, conflict mediators and consensus buildings. According to top executives, the most important factors in influencing others include inspiring people, followed closely by managing effective two-way communication.

Mobilizing people

The most important leadership initiative is creating a culture for learning and innovation. Of least importance is making job security a corporate value. Other factors include helping people adapt to continuous change, focusing on leadership development, giving all the employees decision-making authority and educating people about how the business works.

Survey results show a statistically significant relationship between leadership development efforts and financial success.

Specifically, the more comprehensive a company's leadership development efforts, the better their results were with regard to financial measures such as shareholder return, growth in net income, growth in market share and return on sales.

Highly performing companies are more likely to be using all of the developmental activities such as rewarding people for effective leadership behavior, assessing leadership effectiveness, cross-cultural experiences, mentoring and coaching programs, formal leadership training and job rotations.

One might argue that the successful firms simply have more money to invest in these programs. On the other hand, it is difficult to argue that ignoring leadership development would enable companies to produce the same economic gains.

In fact, rather than debating the cause-effect relationship, it would, at the very least, seem prudent to emulate the behavior of successful enterprises.

(This report was lifted from Advantage, a regular publication of global consulting firm Watson Wyatt.)

Senator's son bats for Pinoy goodies this Christmas

THE HOLIDAY season is upon us once again and you can be sure that you will receive at least one colorful basket filled with imported stuff, from canned goods like the perennial Pinoy favorite Spam, to wines and cheeses.

Not that there's anything wrong with giving away foreign-made goods but if young executive Francisco "Paco" Magsaysay would have his way, he'd rather give away high-quality locally-made products.

"My desire to buy Filipino products is more of an awareness campaign. If only we could get our local small and medium business enterprises, even the larger companies in fact, to patronize local products, the better it will be for our country in the long run," says the 32-year-old son of Sen. Jun Magsaysay and chief executive officer of RMJ Development Corp. and Asian Vision Cable Holdings.

The idea was formed during a chat among peers which later on became a series of brainstorming sessions.

"This isn't really a formal project or anything but more of a group of businessmen talking one day and coming up with this unique idea. Friends of mine, such as Nobel King who's the country manager of Motorola and Prudential Group's All Reyes, were one day talking about the economic situation our country is in and we thought of ways on how to jumpstart the economy," he says.

One thing led to another and the Buy Filipino Products awareness campaign was born. But don't expect the project to be launched formally since Paco and company would rather do it quietly and help out in their own little way.

"More than anything, it's just something we want to pass around maybe through email or word of mouth. There's no personal agenda here since I don't own any company tint's involved in this type of campaign or business," says Francisco.

This low profile stance is not surprising coming from the young Magsaysay. Although he's part of a famous political clan, the US-educated business management graduate Paco has maintained his privacy and stayed away from the glare of the spotlight.

While he was exposed in politics via handing out leaflets, giving some interviews in behalf of his dad, or giving short speeches during campaign sorties for his dad's senatorial bid, he has remained as anonymous as much as he'd wanted to be.

"It has been months since I stepped in my dad's office in the Senate," smiles the father of three kids.

Expectedly, Paco has been getting feelers for him to enter politics but he isn't biting.

If ever, he says, he's only going to enter the field if he's prepared for it. In the meantime, it's enough that he's excelling in the field he's most at home with - managing the family-owned business - and always going by the virtues his parents have taught him, that of honesty, honor, integrity and hard work.

MAGSAYSAY launches own Buy Filipino movement.

These values that he grew up with are what makes him determined to see this country in a much better state, and his Buy Filipino awareness campaign is foremost in his mind. It's not a new idea but for Paco, it's about time that everyone gets "re-introduced" to this concept.

"People don't realize that we've a lot of products being sold in other countries that are actually made in the Philippines. While not every local product are at par with international standards, we still have quite a lot of good stuff," says Paco.

He cites, for instance, companies who have great leather goods like keychains and bags "which can be very good corporate gifts."

"The general impression is that Filipino-made products are inferior but that's not always the case. It's a cultural thing which we have to correct," he says, adding that he is fully aware that the Filipinos are less patriotic when it comes to buying local goods compared to say, the Taiwanese and Japanese.

For his part, Paco tries as much as possible to patronize local goods, something that he likes his family and friends to do as well. "It's very hard to open up a business. As much as I can, I try to help them out because I want them to succeed, whether it's a coffee shop or a restaurant, even down to a regular bazaar."

Paco really hasn't thought of formal plans for his "project". He doesn't mind if this awareness catches on and is adopted by other groups because as far as he is concerned, for this campaign to be successful, everybody has to get involved.

"This is a purely voluntary thing on our part. Besides talking to friends about it, I really haven't done any concrete things," he says.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

When firms grow a conscience

By Gary B. Teves

GOVERNANCE encompasses every institution in society—from the family as the most basic unit, to the nation as a whole. Each level requires effective forms of governance that relies on accountability and transparency, as well as ethics and integrity.

Good public and corporate governance will contribute to the country's sustained economic growth and development. This means more investments, more jobs, higher incomes and finally, larger profits.

This is called the virtuous cycle of good public governance.

Governance in organizations

In organizations, sound governance refers to well-articulated corporate values, codes of conduct and other standards of appropriate behavior, as well as the system used to ensure compliance.

It also entails the establishment of a mechanism for the interaction and cooperation among the board of directors, senior management down to the officers and employees.

Finally, sound governance calls for a strong internal control system—including internal and external audit functions—as well as risk management functions. These three are among the major components of sound governance in organizations.

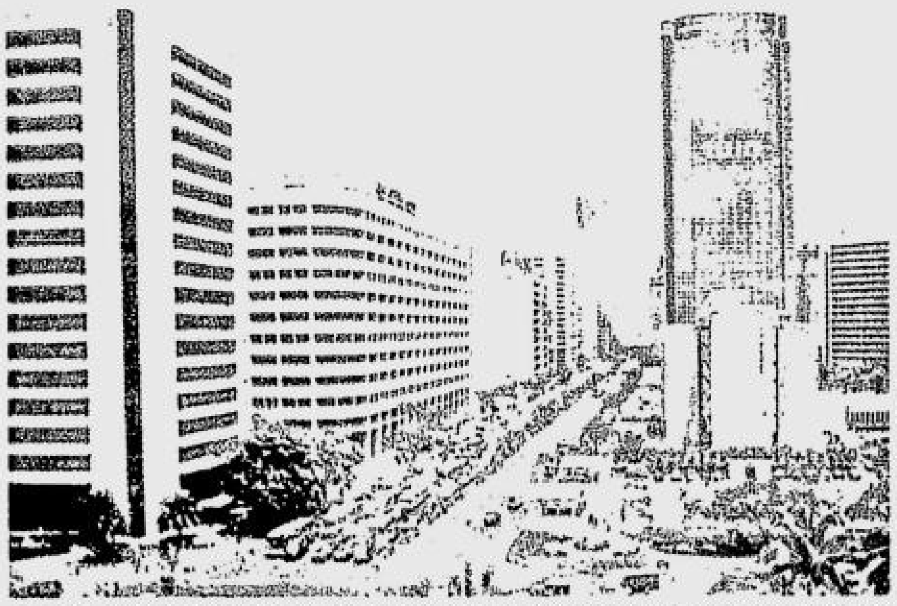
For the banking sector, particularly government financial institutions, corporate governance is premised on the ground that banks are the main channels of savings and the major source of credit.

The efficiency of banks, therefore, affects the financial system and the economy as a whole. On the other hand, the failure of banks can erode public wealth and confidence in the economy.

Bank failures result from bad governance, distorted management incentives, weaknesses in macroeconomic policies, weak supervision and problems in the real sector. Poor governance in banks often leads to resource misallocation, inefficiencies and losses.

ISA

Today, collective efforts are being undertaken by various organizations to implement good governance. The creation of the Institute for Solidarity in Asia or ISA is a welcome move to address this need.



PHILIPPINE corporations are now more aware of the need to be good corporate citizens.

ISA was created through the efforts, among others, of former Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao, Roy Navarro and myself. ISA is concerned with pursuing advocacy programs on good governance. It covers different sectors such as corporations, professions, local government units, the media, the Philippine National Police, and even the film industry.

Challenge for auditors

Government auditors have a major role to play in helping their respective agencies practice sound governance. While governance is basically in the turf of top management, auditors have a strong influence in making management adopt strategies that will positively impact on the organization's overall performance.

One is by impressing upon top management the need to make internal audit an integral part of the organization.

Other practical ways for organizations to institutionalize a system is to publish a regular performance report containing their financial and operational highlights; provide clients with a step-by-step guide when transacting with their offices, along with the standard processing time; and provide clients an easy access to relevant information.

The role of internal audit has evolved through the years. From their traditional task of mere policing, they now have a multi-faceted function that includes auditing, design and implementation of control systems and acting as consultants.

Internal auditors also take the lead in performance appraisals of their organizations' financial, operational and control activities.

There is a growing awareness on the need for a paradigm shift that will eventually transcend operational auditing into a broader form called management auditing. Challenging times call for a means of systematically examining and analyzing the overall performance of management. This simply measures the actions taken or to identify actions that should have been taken. This high-level of auditing is a new area where auditing becomes a true management tool and of real value to all levels of management.

Auditing is indeed a specialized field that requires high moral standards. But this is also true for other professions that seek to practice sound governance.

President Manuel Quezon's words best summarize the essence of sound governance when he said, "In this grand world of ours, I have found in life that fame is nothing, glory is nothing, power is nothing, but honesty, character, service, is all that is lasting."

(Excerpts from the speech of the author, president and CEO of the Land Bank of the Philippines, during the annual convention of the Association of Government Internal Auditors (AGIA) in Palawan.)

Philips CEO bullish about RP economy

GERARD Kleisterlee, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Royal Philips Electronics, will be visiting the Philippines tomorrow.

Kleisterlee has made it a point to visit the Philippines as it is fast becoming an important part of Philips, and one of the major supply centers of the company.

A major investor in the Philippine economy, Philips provides continuous employment for Filipinos while boosting export revenues.

Kleisterlee will be accompanied by Johan van Splunter, regional executive for Philips South Asia Region.

Philips' top man has also expressed confidence on the Philippine economy.

"We have been doing business in the Philippines for many years and we're very optimistic that the industry will remain strong and booming," he says.

Kleisterlee graduated with a degree in Electronic Engineering from the Eindhoven Technical University in 1946. He started his career in Philips as part of the medical systems division in 1974, and held higher positions before being appointed president in 1999.

Royal Philips Electronics is one of the world's biggest electronics companies and Euope's largest.

It is a global leader in color television sets, lighting, electric shavers, color picture tubes for televisions and monitors and one-chip TV products.

Its 200,000 employees in more than 60 countries are active in the areas of lighting, consumer electronics, domestic appliances, components, semiconductors and medical systems.

What to do when it's time to pass on wealth

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

PERSONAL FINANCE

SINGAPORE—ONE striking characteristic of large corporations in Asia is that most are family-owned.

Many of these families are now headed by the second generation and huge transfers of wealth are imminent over the next 10 to 20 years.

This impending transfer of the reins of power to the next generation poses significant problems to the current leaders, as succession is not always successful.

In the Philippines, many families were ruined because of property disputes. There is the famous Ilusorio case that pitted husband against wife, brothers against sisters and the Garcia family involving siblings.

In fact, the docket of the Securities and Exchange Commission, which used to handle intra corporate disputes, used to overflow with cases involving bitter family disputes.

Peter Triggs, vice president and managing director of Citigroup's Global Wealth Structuring Group, Asia Pacific, said during a seminar on personal finance here that owners of family corporations are now seriously thinking about smoothing the way to succession.

Failure to do so puts the patriarch's wealth at risk, impairing his ability to preserve it and ensure that it goes to the next generation, or to his other beneficiaries.

Risks include incapacity due to an accident, failure of the business, remarriage of a spouse, the impact of wealth on the children and the awareness of the children that the wealth has been transferred to them.

One option is to put the money or the wealth in single name accounts.

Triggs, however, says that this is quite risky because there is no privacy, no provision for disability and is subject to legal delays and expense.

The accounts are also frozen when the account holder dies, thus, will be subject to legal delays and expense.

Triggs relates the experience of one family who had to wait for almost two decades before they could get even part of the wealth left behind by the parent, and even then the wealth was subjected to taxes.

There was a recent incident in Singapore of the one-day millionaire. He got several millions from a relative who died but because the estate was not protected from taxes, the inheritance was wiped out. He even had to pay the bank back because there were taxes left unpaid.

How about joint name accounts or powers of attorney? Triggs says it is also quite risky.

For one thing, putting another name on an account makes that person an owner of that wealth. This means that the owner cannot remove that name in the account unless the other person agrees.

Triggs adds that funds under joint name accounts are exposed to creditors of the other party, who may also have financial difficulties or face litigation.

There is also no distribution plan and confusion will arise if both signatories pass away. These accounts can also be subject to asset freezing and estate tax, and heirs who are minors will not be protected.

Triggs says one of the better alternatives is the creation of a distribution trust and private investment company, which would take over the life insurance policy, bank accounts and real estate.

Unlike the personal accounts, the distribution of the estate is handled by a trustee, ensuring smooth transition. These are more protected against heavy tax liabilities if the owner passes away.

Triggs says that the Philippines is one of the growing markets for Citigroup's global wealth structuring as most of the corporations here are thinking about transferring their wealth to the next generation.

"Succession is becoming more of a concern because family members are building business and citizenship connections with other countries. This is why we are growing our business there," he says.

What does globalization mean for our society?

(From page C12)

witness the resurgence of democracy in the region," declares Rainsy.

The Philippine member of CALD is the Liberal Party.

Globalization existed for centuries: from the time of Marco Polo, explorers opened new markets for trade. What made the present wave different is its sheer pace and scope. Nations were being integrated into the world economy at amazing speed.

Telecommunications indeed turned the world into a global village. Because of the Internet, it would be easy to order any merchandise from the other side of the planet.

However, globalization also attacked the safety of the old order. Global goods, ideas and entertainment could threaten national cultures.

Deliberately chosen

The rapid globalization in recent years was partly the fruit of technological change. When funds zipped across the planet at the click of a mouse, products and people were bound to follow.

But it was also a function of policy. Many governments deliberately agreed to cut trade barriers. So in the final analysis, globalization ended up at the desk of policy-makers. They decided how much they would integrate their nations with the world economy.

As such, one session explored the topic, "Globalization: Boon or Bane?"

The argument was that globalization brought about faster growth, cheaper goods, more foreign investments, new technology and greater competition. These often resulted in more jobs and higher living standards.

On the other hand, cheap imports could challenge local firms; at the extreme, some shut down and threw many out of their jobs. The volatile currency markets could destabilize the whole system. Further, the giant international agencies were seen as imposing policies on sovereign governments. The discussions identified the major issues for policy makers.

"National businesses are increasingly unable to justify protection behind tariff walls and other favored treatment," noted the CALD organizers.

The local firms were pushed to compete with foreign imports and multinational companies. Some enterprises might be vulnerable, and those who couldn't adapt endured losses. Those that would not take to new communications technology were also hit.

The session explored the challenges to policy makers. It asked, what steps were needed to raise the competitiveness of Asian economies? What institutional and legal reforms were needed to turn them into stronger players? What factors blocked effective reform?

Anyone can reach a global audience

Another session focused on media, communications, and culture. Telecommunication has let loose a revolution on the entire social order. Hierarchies were flattened. Autocratic governments used to hold power through their access of top-down communications.

Not any more. Through e-mail and web sites, anyone could communicate to the broad masses. Any individual could become a publisher reaching out to a global audience. It was possible to form communities of people scattered across the continents.

The panel examined how the new technology has reshaped politics. They reported on how the parties used the technology for political communication. In fact, some governments sought to control the use of such potent media. Another concern was how all these impacted on local and national cultures.

Global civil society

There was a session devoted to civil society. The present era witnessed how giant NGO networks emerged to sweep the nations. International NGOs could mobilize members from across the planet to train their guns on common causes. They generated unlikely coalitions and were naturals with the media.

A recent development was the global network of activists who unleashed havoc at the meetings of multilateral agencies. Think of the Battle of Seattle.

These made for interesting questions. How much did international NGOs affect national policy? Would these groups give birth to international civil society? How could they be made more accountable to their claimed constituencies?

Terror from dissent was globalized. It was amazing how a rebel network extended well across the planet, attacking the most powerful country on earth. The terror of one day in one great city damaged the entire global economy.

A session dealt with the reform of political institutions. They should sharpen their capacity to deal with globalization. Further, the trend would expose local institutions to the harsh glare of world opinion.

"Globalization also provides local, national, and regional institutions with access to ideas and models from all over the world from which to learn and borrow," noted CALD.

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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

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Cocopea, Fape seminars for school execs

THE COORDINATING Council of Private Educational Association (Cocopea) and the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (Fape) will hold a conference launching the "Enrichment Seminar-Series for the Emerging Education Executive" on Nov. 22 to 23 at the Grand Ballroom of the New World Renaissance Hotel, corner Makati Avenue and Esperanza Street in Makati City.

The conference will revolve around the theme, "The Emerging Education Executives in the New Millennium: Managing the Challenge of Change."

Registration starts at 8 a.m. on Nov. 22. The registration fee for the two-day conference is P3,500 per participant. Interested parties may call up Marie Zaldivia at the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (Pacu) secretariat at telephone number 638-5635.

The objective of the Cocopea conference is to give the second and third-generation executives of private schools, who are being trained to take over the management of their educational institutions, a macro perspective on the changing environment brought about by technological advances in the new millennium, which will exert tremendous impact on their school's operations.

The Enrichment Seminar-Series is being managed by a Cocopea-Fape committee with Dr. Maria Lim-Ayuyao, immediate past president of the Cocopea and executive vice president of Centro Escolar University as chair, and Dr. Vincent Fabella, executive vice president of Jose Rizal University, as project director.

The conference will start with an invocation to be delivered by Fr. Roderick Salazar, Jr., SVD, president of Cocopea. The keynote speaker will be Virgilio L. Peña, presidential assistant on ICT and executive director of the Information Technology and E-Commerce Council, who will deliver a paper on "Technology and its Impact on Education."

A panel discussion will feature four young entrepreneurs who have been able to build successful business ventures: Felix Limcaoco, SVP and general manager, Hambrecht & Quist; Joanna Duarte, president, Big and Small Co.; Jose Alberto Dimayuga, general manager, Aurotech Systems; and Sheila Ramos, managing director of SPARC. They will describe "Futuristic Trends in the New Millennium."

Rowen Untiveros, country manager of Alcatel Philippines Inc., will describe "A Profile of the Gen Y and X Student Clientele." Dr. Virgilio Bautista, president of the University of Baguio, will talk on "School-to-school Alliances;" Dr. Ester Ogena, executive director of the DOST-Science Education Institute, and Andrew King, director of IDP Education Australia, on "Strategic Alliances between Schools and Educational Agencies;" professor Leonida Africa, vice president for academic affairs of the Lyceum of the Philippines, on "IT in Academic Management: Benefits and Constraints;" and professor Ludendorffo Decenteceo, registrar of the University of the Philippines-Diliman on "IT Systems on Registration, Enrolment and Class Scheduling for Educational Management: The UP Experience." Soledad Lecaroz, vice president for Eduvision, will conduct a demonstration on computer-aided instruction.

TARGET:MARKET
Asintado sa Pinoy ngayon
MDi
meridian

MERIDIAN SUPPORTS 17TH PAC

Meridian Telekoms Inc., the country's pioneer in fixed wireless broadband Internet connections, and MDi, a leading local systems integrator, recently signed a partnership agreement with the Philippine Ad Congress for its 17th PAC to be held in Cebu from Nov. 21 to 24. Shown is Ricky Peña, vice president for sales and marketing of Meridian (seated, third from left) and Blen Fernando, chair of the administrative committee of PAC (seated, fourth from left), signing the contract. Also shown are (seated, from left) Marcel Crespo of Meridian, Eiko Raquel of MDi, Fely Rosales, head of registration for the 17th PAC, (standing from left) Cergen Go, comptroller of PAC and Boy Aquino, head of secretariat of PAC. An Internet café will be set up during the event and Meridian will be providing the high-speed Internet connection, while MDi will bring in the hardware and software. Meridian and MDi will also handle the web-based registration and database of the 17th PAC.

FOCUS: 17th AD CONGRESS

TARGET:MARKET

RPN 9 SIGNS IN

TV network station RPN signed in recently as a meal sponsor of the 17th Philippine Advertising Congress to be held Nov. 21-24 at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel in Lahug, Cebu. Shown at the signing were (seated, from left) overall chair Noy Dy-Liacco, RPN 9 president lawyer Lincoln Tan, vice chair Angelica Suiza and finance director Jun Alcantara. Standing, from left were Pana executive director Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon and ways and means chair Gil Chua.

Talk straight to your market

HE IS handsome. Educated. Upwardly mobile. He reads the main broadsheets and is up-to-date with international news. You can talk on everything under the sun, and there's no dull moment with him.

He is cosmopolitan and techno-savvy. He has impeccable taste for everything. He goes to the gym four times a week. While guys of his age have become slobs and grown beer bellies, he's still as gorgeous as the first time you saw him. You would say he is the perfect guy to bring to Mom and marry. And he has something some or most of us don't have—disposable income.

Before you get excited, we'll tell you straight—he's gay. Oops. Any apprehensions? Shall we continue? How can you advertise to a market which is cynical about being targeted by advertisers?

The following facts might open your minds. They are based on the latest Birrell-Rapson report from Manash University in Australia on census data on gay men in de facto relationships. 28 percent are professionals, compared to other men, 32 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 13 percent of heterosexual men. 26 percent of older gay men earned more than $52,000 a year, compared with 19 percent of heterosexual men.

According to a Mardi Gras survey, 65 percent of Mardi Gras members have access to the Internet. Figures for the 1998 Significant Others Survey Star Observer readers survey show: 49 percent of readers own a personal computer and 40.5 percent have their own modem. 42 percent traveled overseas during the preceding 12 months for holidays. 45 percent have a mobile phone, and 14 percent are connected to pay TV.

While there are no official surveys conducted on gay men's profile in the Philippines, the figure could be as close to the above-mentioned data. If that is correct, you might be stepping on a gold mine with the color pink. The "pink" market is now recognized as a powerful force by big marketers in large companies. In the United Kingdom, for example, the drinks and lodging giant Bass has just opened 28 gay pubs to cash in on this lucrative market.

In 2002, Sydney will host the Gay Games, for which sponsorships are still available. The previous Gay Games held in Amsterdam in 1998 attracted more competitors than the Olympics, although fewer spectators. Heineken beer was to have been the major alcohol sponsor for the Gay Games in Amsterdam, but at the last minute it got cold feet and canceled its sponsorship without giving a reason. Cries of homophobia reverberated throughout the world's media. In response, gays and lesbians in Europe decided to boycott Heineken beer. The ban had such an effect on Heineken sales that the company was forced to write an apology to the Gay Games committee.

The real opener and bonus is that gays usually do not have children. It costs a fortune to raise a child over 20 years and they usually have an extra pocket to spend over the next decades. The gay market is also a high affinity group. They want to trade with those who are interested in building a relationship. According to Danny Vadasz, CEO of gay marketing consultancy Bluestone Media, "They feel a bond with companies that show they are on their side. While generic ads may be irrelevant, gross stereotypes can be offensive, such as an overuse of drag imagery."

As a sophisticated market, the gay community like ads that have clever copy, stylish layout and are provocative. "It is not a conservative community. It is used to shocking and enjoys it. The community responds to cheekiness in ads," Vadasz says.

In Australia, the seminal ad for the gay community was made for Toyota in 1990. The ad pictures a Toyota Corolla with two men and a dog in front of a terrace house. The caption read, "The Family Car," which was seen as a strong statement of support for the legal rights of marriage for the gay and lesbian community. The ad was made by the Australian gay magazine Outrage because nobody at Toyota or its ad agency felt they understood gay tastes well enough. The ad had a strong effect on sales. It was also hailed as a world-first and republished by gay newspapers in the United States.

Although many companies can benefit from marketing to gays, it is important to check whether there is a predisposition in the market to buy your product. It is necessary for a company to check that it is gay-friendly before it tries to capture the pink peso. While a good marketing campaign could be destroyed by the publicity of an employee who alleges sexual harassment on the grounds of sexuality, a company that has non-discriminatory employment practices will gain goodwill from the politically aware gay community.

As gays have greater impact on mainstream culture, many people advertising to the mainstream community are employing gay imagery, recognizing the blurred lines between gay and straight. And as queer sexuality gains broader acceptance in society, more mainstream marketers will target gays. Marketers who cannot quickly learn how to appeal to this market may find in a few years' time that their competitors have already captured the loyalties of gay consumers.

The gay and other markets. Know their huge potential in expanding your business. Call the 17th PAC Secretariat now at 8186158, 8177724, and 8928359.

Graduate courses at AIJC

ENROLMENT for the graduate programs in Communication Management and Journalism at the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC) is ongoing. Courses offered are Research and Information Utilization, Roberto Victoriano, AIJC lecturer; Development Environment of Communication, Dr. Angelito Manalili, dean of UP College of Social Work and Community Development; Statistics, Corazon Arboleda, AC Nielsen Consultant; and News Development Techniques, Isagani Yambot, publisher of Philippine Daily Inquirer.

For more information, call the Registrar's office at 724-4564/724-4604; e-mail aijcmla@info.com.ph or visit www.asianjournalism.com.ph, or visit our office at Unit 902 Annapolis Wilshire Plaza, 11 Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila.

All systems go for PowerTrends 2001

IT IS ALL systems go for PowerTrends 2001, the 4th international exhibition on new trends in technologies for energy and power engineering. It will reel off Dec. 5 to 7 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila as a major activity in observance of Energy Week, the annual event sponsored by the Department of Energy.

Industry players from the Philippines and other countries look forward to the trade show, which will be held concurrently with PowerTech Business Forum 2001, the 5th international business forum on power and energy engineering.

Leaders of the energy and power industry from Asia-Pacific countries, including the Philippines, and from Europe and the United States will be among the resource speakers of the business conference that focus on strategic activities in implementation of various government projects and major energy efficiency programs to encourage the economic, efficient and effective use of all forms of energy.

PowerTrends 2001 will incorporate New & Renewable Energy 2001 Philippines, the international exhibition on new and renewable energy; and Electec 2001 Philippines, the international technology exhibition on electrical and electrotechnical engineering.

PowerTrends 2001 will be sponsored by the Department of Energy, the National Power Corp., the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association, and the Renewable Energy Association of the Philippines. It is supported by the UK DTI New & Renewable Energy Program; Korea Electrical Manufacturers Association; and Korea Electrical Manufacturers Cooperative.

The trade show is organized by the Singapore-based Interfama International and Interfama Philippines. For more information, call Elizabeth Cruz or Robert Sanchez at (632) 818-6828 or e-mail lvrge@netasia.net.

Convention on globalization's impact on work and careers

CORAZON Alma G. de Leon, former chair of the Civil Service Commission and PRC commissioner, will deliver the keynote speech on "Career Development Issues and Dilemmas as a Result of Globalization: Challenges to Career Development Practitioners" at the annual convention of the Career Development Association of the Philippines (CDAP), formerly PhicGuide, from Nov. 21 to 23 at the Traders Royal Hotel. The theme of the convention is "Globalization and Its Impact on Work and Careers."

Expected to attend this convention are human resources development practitioners from the business and industry sectors, from government agencies and non-government organizations, and school administrators and guidance and counseling practitioners from colleges and universities. Attendees will participate in workshops to raise their consciousness and motivation to produce and develop a competitive Filipino global workforce, starting from the home to the schools and training institutions to local and international employing sectors.

Professor Tomas B. Lopez, Jr., president of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Makati and professor at the Asian Institute of Management will deliver the second keynote speech on "Developing the Filipino Global Citizen: School-Home Partnership" in the afternoon of Nov. 21.

Former Secretary of Labor Nieves Confessor will deliver the third keynote speech on "Profile of the Filipino Global Citizen" on Nov. 22. She will be followed by presentations of former Tesda director general Edicio G. dela Torre who will talk on "A Global Outlook in Public Service" and by Ferdinand M. dela Cruz, president and general manager of Kraft Foods Inc. who will talk on "Raising the Bar: The Filipino Global Workforce."

Dr. Benjamin G. Tayabas, president of Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila will give a talk on "Career Development Technologies" to be followed by presentations of career development tools for effective recruitment, selection, development and placement of people for the right jobs and careers.

Thelma Geraldine A. Baricaua, international consultant and past CDAP president, will present and give a workshop on "Developing Global Literacies of Career Development Practitioners".

Contact persons are Dr. Josefina O. Santamaria, Career Systems Inc. at 759-2117 and 893-5270 (care of Cora) and e-mail carsys@qinet.net or Dr. Elvira Irene Ramos of MLQ University at 734-5703, 734-0121 local 112 (care of Len) and e-mail elvirene88@yahoo.com.

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To allow more Filipino students to view 'Miong', a musical about the life of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the Tan Yan Kee Foundation Inc donated P2 million to Repertory Philippines. Foundation trustee and treasurer Mariano Tanenglian (third from right) is shown handing the check to Joy G. Virata, VP-Repertory Philippines (fourth from left). Also shown are (from left) Repertory's Zenaida Amador and Tan Yan Kee trustees Shirley Chua, Andres Narvasa, Cesar Virata, Tan Hui Bin and Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J. Headed by businessman Lucio C. Tan, the Tan Yan Kee Foundation is the principal philanthropic arm of the Tan Group of Companies.

HERITAGE PARK AT GLOBAL CITY

The Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) and Heritage Park Management Corp. (HPMC) recently held the inauguration of Heritage Park at Fort Bonifacio Global City. Heritage Park, a 76-hectare memorial park development, is expected to elevate present standards in memorial and interment services with its high-value, multi-use memorial park complex and modern interment facilities. Shown is BCDA chair Rogelio L. Singson (center) and HPMC president Anthony Woo (second from right) leading the ribbon-cutting ceremonies with Taguig mayor Sigfrido R. Tinga and vice-mayor Loida O. Labao-Alzona (left) during the inauguration and blessing of the park's administration building.

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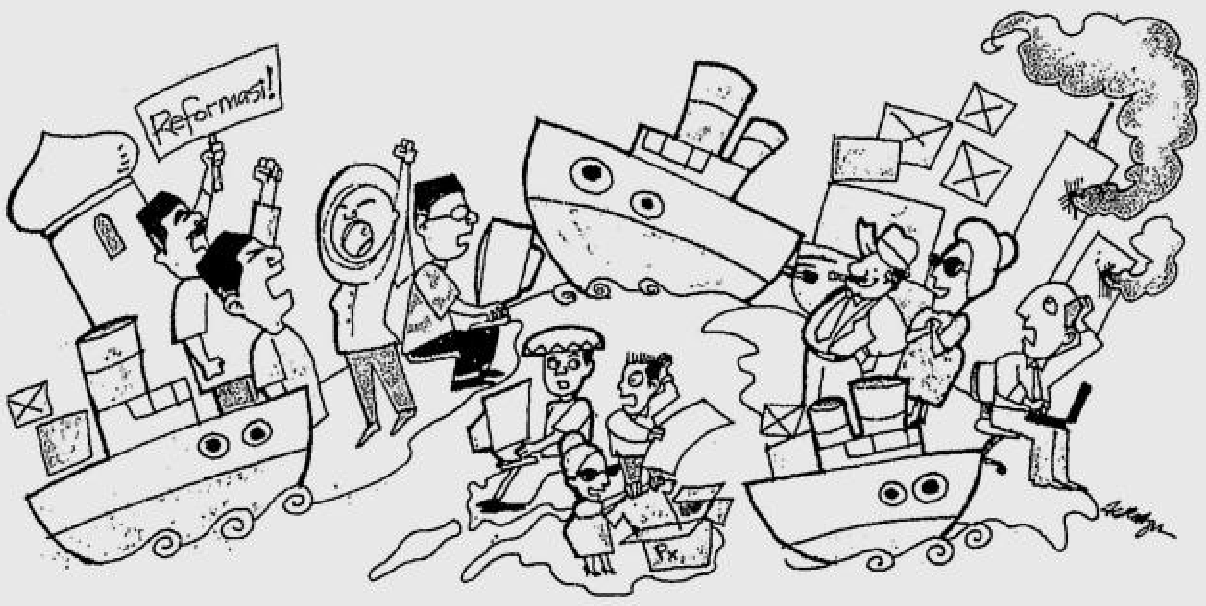
What does globalization mean for our society?



By Dennis M. Arroyo

TWO months ago, people around the planet grieved as they saw the attack on the World Trade Center. They later felt the threat of terror in their own home countries. Then they reeled from the economic impact of Sept. 11.

Global grief, global terror and then a global downturn. No country could truly call itself an island because of globalization.

Globalization had to be studied, so an international conference in Manila dissected the phenomenon. It brought together leading names from the world of Asian politics.

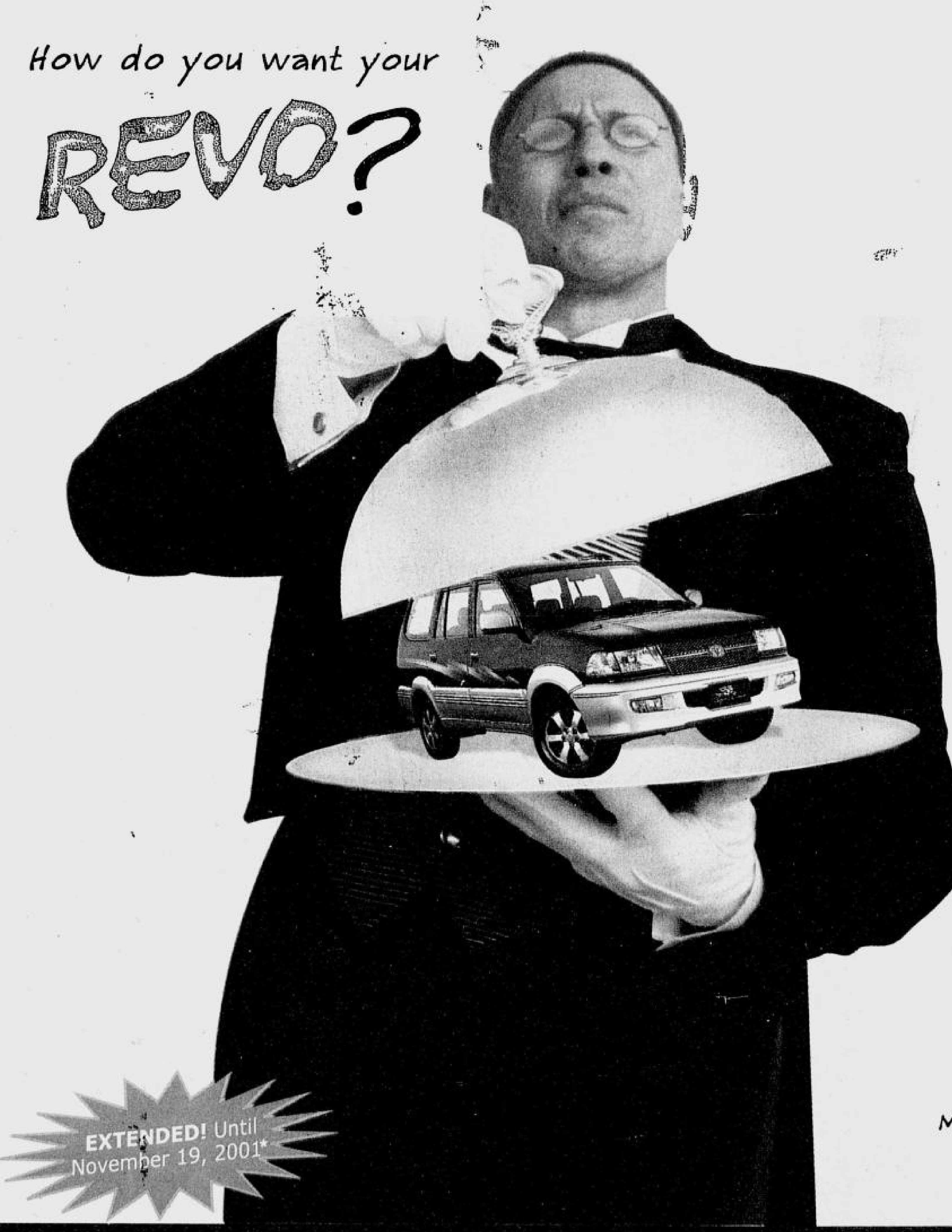
Dialogue among democrats

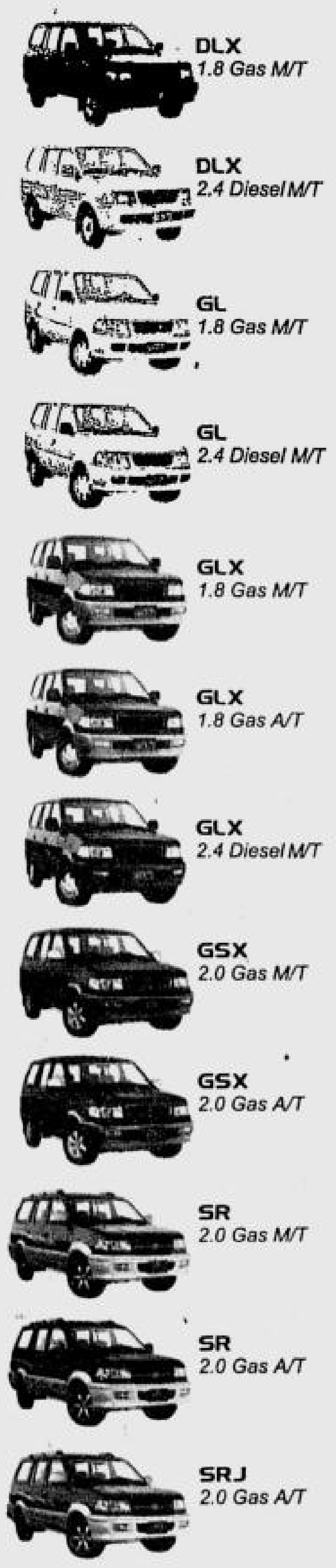
Attending the conference were prominent Asian politicians, economists, academics, leaders of non-government organizations. The conference, sponsored by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, was held at the New World Hotel last Nov. 15 to 17.

It was organized by the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats or CALD, an alliance of parties. CALD offers a special forum for dialogue among Asian democrats. At its helm is Sam Rainsy, respected politician from Cambodia.

"Cries for freedom and reforms reverberate in all corners of the continent. In Demokrasi, Reformasi, Doi Moi, People Power or by any other name, we

WHAT/ C9





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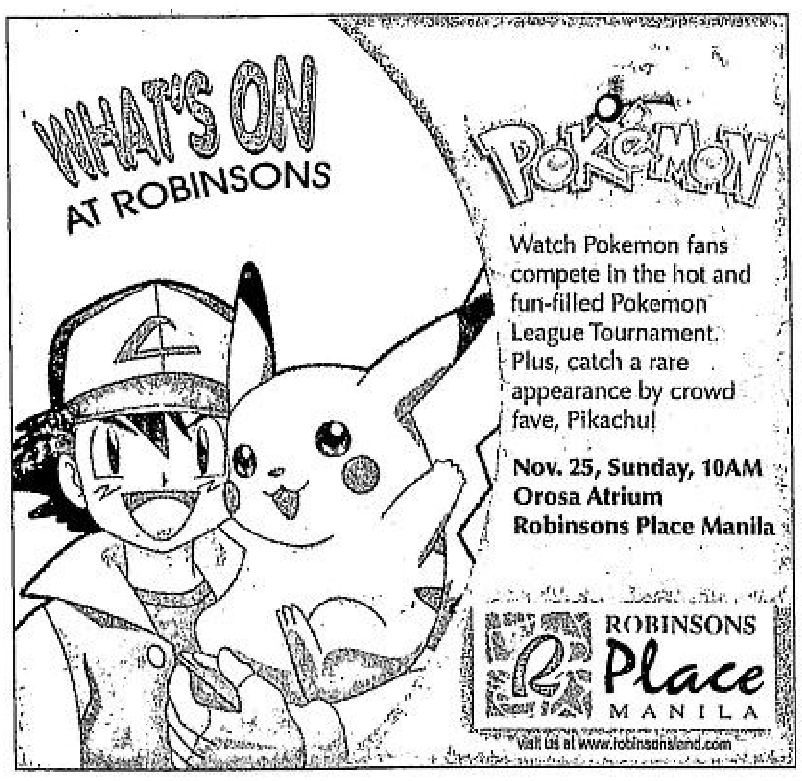
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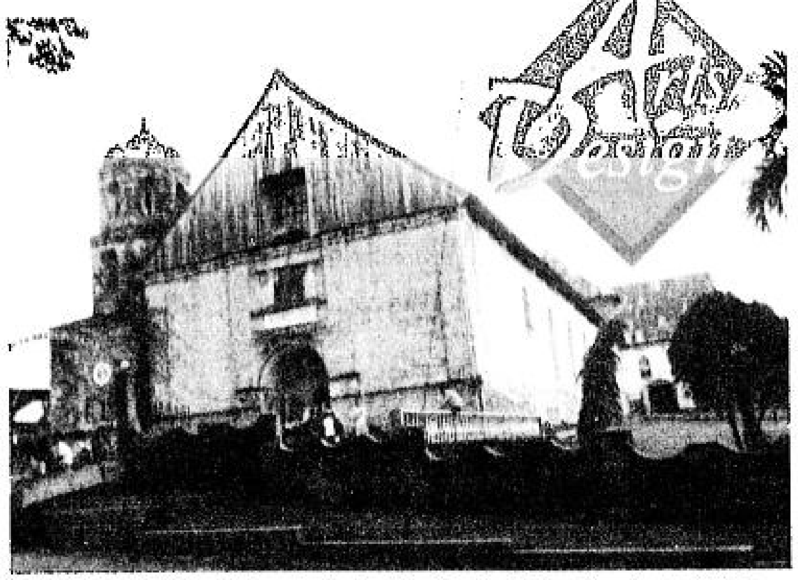
CHURCH of San Isidro in Lazi, Siquijor built by the Augustinian Recollects in the 19th century

NCCA lists top ancient churches for restoration

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

THE PROGRAM for the Preservation and Conservation of the Philippine Built Heritage is the most far-reaching program ever to maintain our vanishing built heritage. Initiated by chair Jaime Laya of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the first step in this program is to identify the first group of churches to be assisted in conservation and the type of assistance they need most.

This is indeed a flagship project since this is the first national effort to establish a long-range scientific architectural conservation program, putting at the disposal of church authorities technical assistance and a budget for conservation interventions that was previously unavailable to the clergy.

An NCCA group of experts led by Regalado Trota José, the foremost church scholar in the country, finalized a list of the 25 most outstanding churches in the country. The general criteria for inclusion in the list are:

- Most of the church complex (church, *convento*, churchyard) should have been constructed during the Spanish colonial period (prior to 1898) and must be reasonably intact.
- The church interiors must have preserved most of their pre-1898 furnishings, if not the ambience.
- The architecture must be an excellent representation of some artistic style or technique, or must be the best example of religious colonial architecture in the area.
- Examples must be chosen from each of the original church-building orders (Augustinians,

NCCA/p.D2

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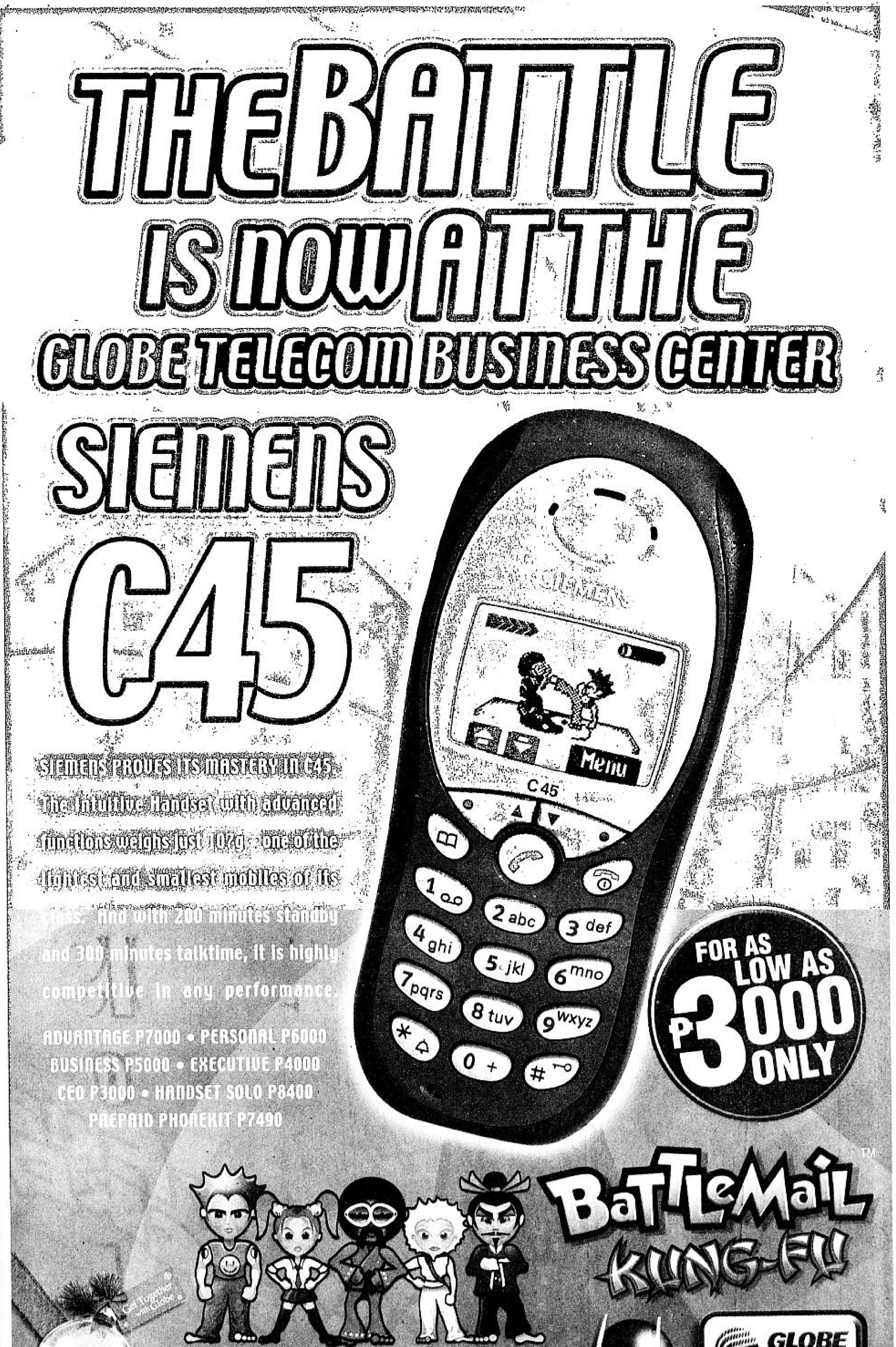
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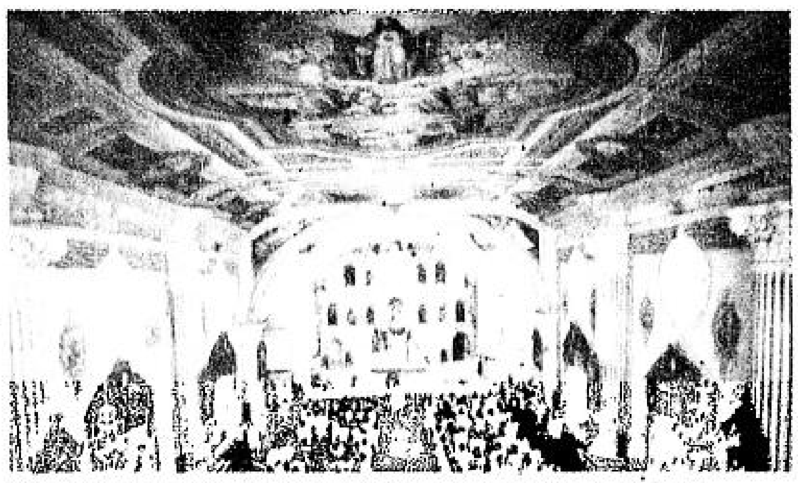
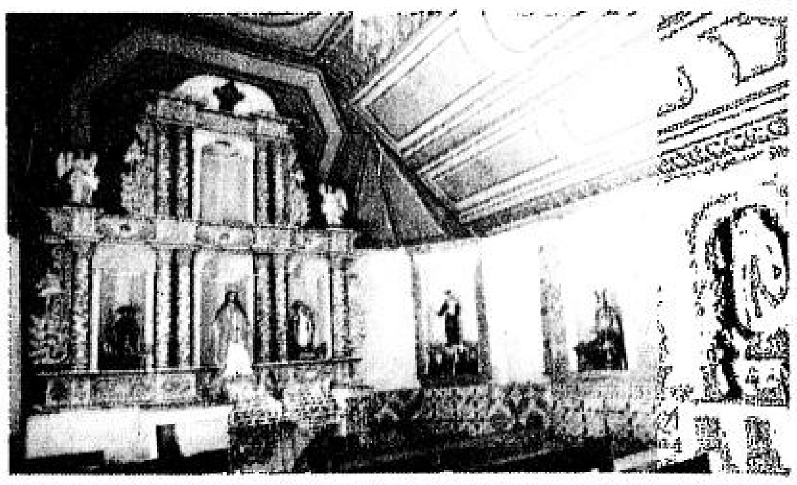
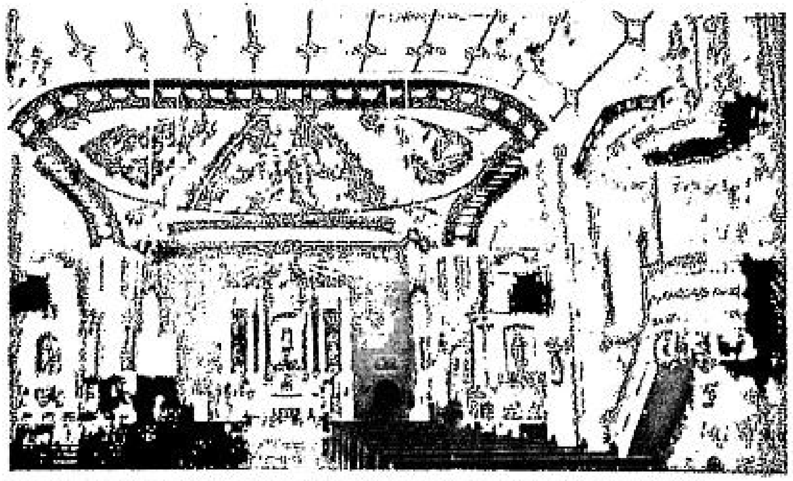


AWESOME interiors with beautiful *retablo* of the church of Santiago Apostol in Betis, Pampanga built by the Augustinians.



PARISH church of the Immaculate Conception in Guiuan, Eastern Samar built by the Jesuits



INTERIORS of the Church of the Immaculate Concepion in Balayan, Batangas built by Recollects and native secular priests

NCCA lists top ancient churches for restoration project

At least 26 churches, most of them built by the great missionary orders, have been identified for conservation assistance, the first national effort to establish a long-range architectural conservation program

(From page D1)

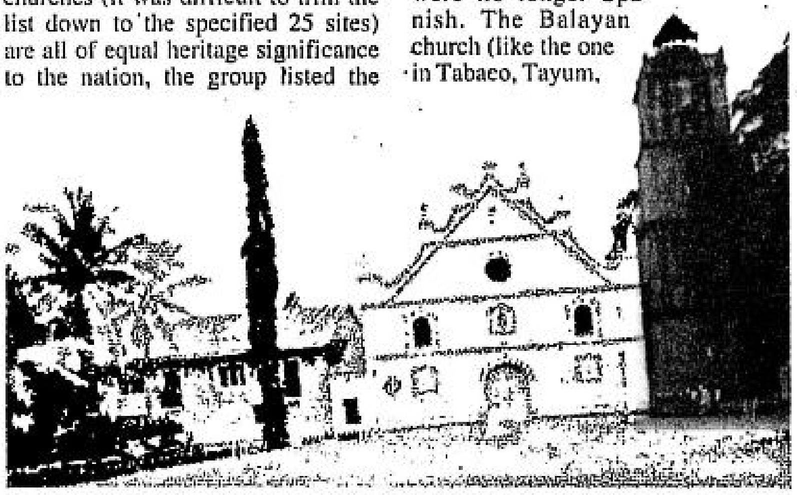
Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, Augustinian Recollects) as well as the secular clergy (that is, priests directly under the supervision of the bishop).

- Examples must be chosen from all major regions of the Philippines; only one church per province.
- All things being equal, an added consideration will be the cultural landscape qualities of the site (picturesqueness of the church ensemble vis-à-vis its natural surroundings).
- Not included in this project are the four churches inscribed in the Unesco World Heritage List (San Agustin, Santa Maria, Paoay, Miagao).

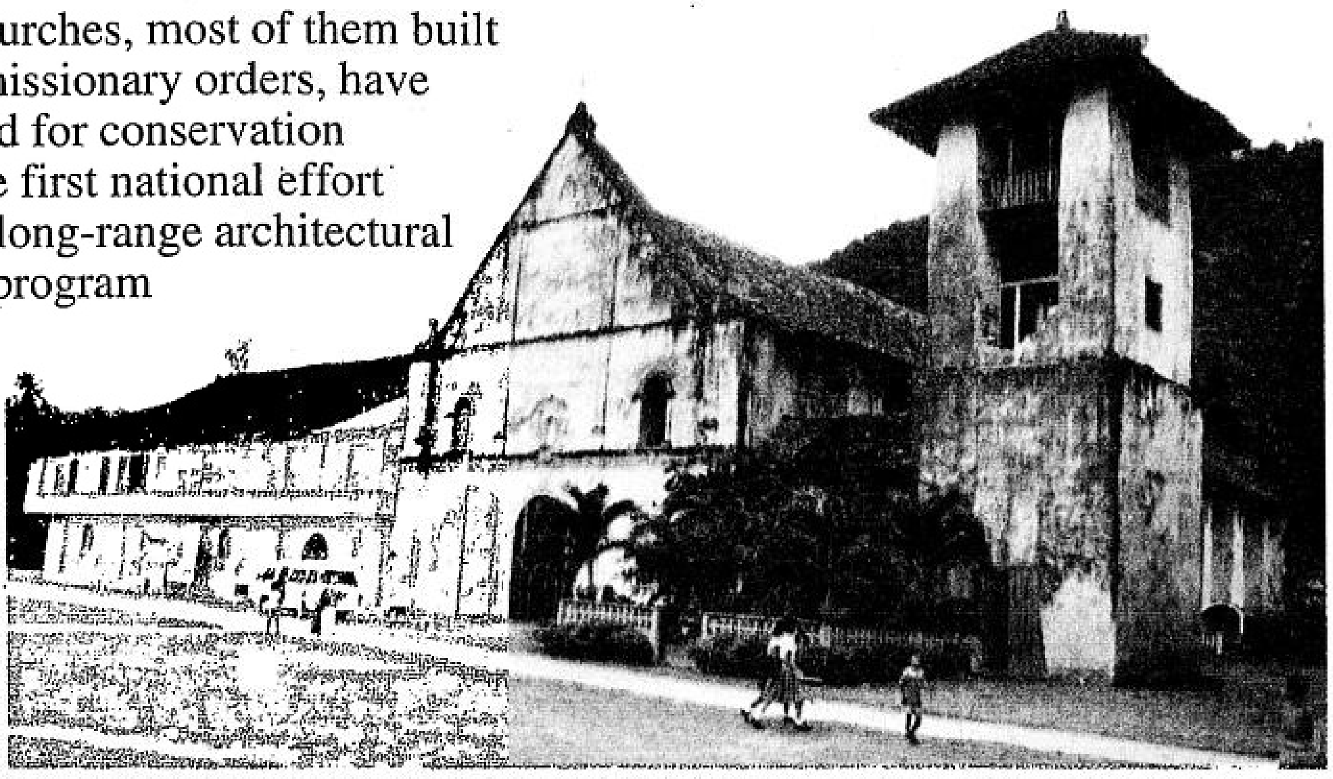
Stressing that the list of 26 churches (it was difficult to trim the list down to the specified 25 sites) are all of equal heritage significance to the nation, the group listed the churches alphabetically by order of location:

1. Bacong, Negros Oriental—Parish church of San Agustin, built in the second half of the 19th century by the Agustinian Recollects. This is the best-preserved church complex in Negros Oriental. It has a late 19th-century pipe organ. The finely cut stonework of the bell tower is noteworthy, as well as its construction material, which is not the usual white coralline stone found in the Visayas. The sacristy boasts of painted friezes.

2. Balayan, Batangas—Parish church of the Immaculate Conception, built in the early 19th century by the secular clergy with later additions by the Augustinian Recollects. The 19th-century secular clergy were no longer Spanish. The Balayan church (like the one in Tabaco, Tayum, and to some extent, Maragondon) is one of the few examples of churches built by *indio* priests. The interior has not changed much since the 1870s, proven by a print made at that time showing the church interiors. The church is severely endangered at this very moment with the construction of a McDonald's restaurant nearby.



CHURCH of San Vicente Ferfer in Dupax, Nueva Vizcaya built by the Dominicans. The *convento* still preserves slits in walls for archers to fire arrows against raiders.



THE CHURCH of Patrocinio de Maria in Boljo-on, Cebu built by the Augustinians still retains its original terra-cotta tiles.

3. Betis, Pampanga—Parish church of Santiago Apostol, built in the 18th century by the Augustinians. This church has what is considered the most beautiful *retablo* (decorative altar background with niches for images) in Pampanga, arguably the best in Central Luzon. Original wooden furnishings are still in the sacristy and the *convento*. The wooden floor, a later addition, is well maintained. Ceiling paintings are from the 20th century.

4. Boljo-on, Cebu—Parish church of Patrocinio de Maria. Built in the late 18th to the early 19th centuries under the direction of the Augustinians, the church and its decorations are artistically related to those of the neighboring towns of Argao, Dalaguete and Samboan, but among them Boljo-on has the most developed style. The pierced woodwork on the choir screen and pulpit, including the gold-leafing and polychromy on the *retablos* are among the best in the country. Its roof still retains the original terra-cotta tiles. The outstanding complex includes remains of fortifications, a cemetery and a blockhouse.

5. Calasiao, Pangasinan—Parish church of Saints Peter and Paul, built from the 17th to the 19th centuries by the Dominicans. This is the best-preserved church complex in Pangasinan. The bell tower and some parts of the church have been recently reconstructed after suffering earthquake damage. The sprawling *convento* that was the site of the 18th-century Synod of Calasiao shows, an excellent example of a detached kitchen structure.

6. Dupax, Nueva Vizcaya—Parish church of San Vicente Ferrer, built in

NCCA/ p.D3

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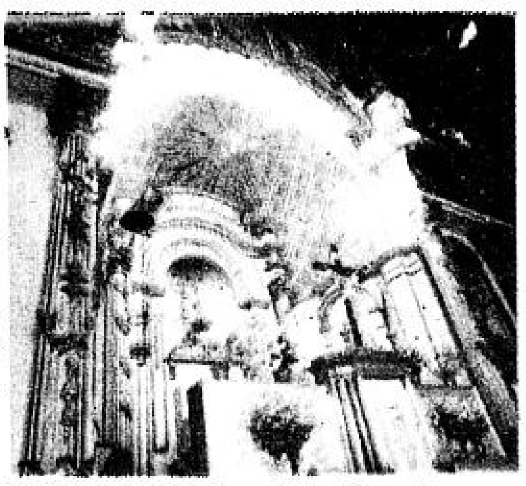
CONVENT of the church of Lazi, Siquijor, the biggest in the Philippines

FACADE of the Balayan, Batangas church

ORNATE door of church of Guiuan, Eastern Samar



MAGNIFICENT altar of the Jimenez church in Misamis Occidental

NCCA lists top ancient churches . . .

(From page D2)

the second half of the 18th century by the Dominicans. This is the best-preserved church complex in Nueva Vizcaya. The baptistery and narthex pillars are covered with carved stucco of a fineness unmatched in the country. The *convento* still preserves slits in the outer walls for archers to fire their arrows against raiders.

7. Guiuan, Eastern Samar—Parish church of the Immaculate Conception, built by the Jesuits in the early 18th century and further decorated by the Franciscans in the 19th century. The church complex is the best-preserved in the Samar-Leyte region. This is the only church in the country where natural shells and corals are used for decoration throughout the church, with the baptistery having the most outstanding patterns. There are remains of fortifications throughout the complex.

8. Jasa-an, Misamis Oriental—Parish church of the Immaculate Conception, built in the late 19th to the early 20th centuries by the Jesuits. The church is a "provincial" attempt at imitating the San Ignacio church in Manila. There are significant portions of the original brick paving and neo-Gothic *retablo*. The ceiling woodwork is reminiscent of basket weave. The *convento* is a remarkable wooden structure, an enormous *bahay na bato* supported by massive wooden posts.

9. Jimenez, Misamis Occidental—Parish church of San Juan Bautista, built in the second half of the 19th century by the Augustinian Recollects. The idyllic site was originally inhabited by the Subanon tribe. It is the best-preserved church complex in the province, if not in Mindanao. The interior is richly decorated with sculpture, painting and metalwork. The ceiling is of painted canvas done in 1898 that covers an earlier painting done directly on the wooden ceiling boards. The *retablo mayor* is in good condition. Its limestone walls are covered with faux marbre painting with matching Gothic arches. The upper walls are of *tabique pampango*, a local variant of the wattle-and-daub technique (panels of interwoven wooden slates or tree branches that are covered with lime). The original clockwork remains intact.

10. Lazi, Siquijor (Negros Oriental)—Parish church of San Isidro Labrador, built in the second half of the 19th century under the Augustinian Recollects. The well-preserved church complex is grandiose, occupying two town blocks. It is situated on the higher portion of the hilly town of Lazi, surrounded by venerable acacia trees. The magnificent floor of wide wooden planks vies with those in the churches of Valencia and Duero in Bohol as the best in the country. The *convento*, situated across the street from the church, is probably the largest in the country.

11. Loboc, Bohol—Parish Church of San Pedro and San Pablo, built in the 17th and 18th centuries by the Jesuits, enlarged in the 18th and 19th centuries by the Augustinian Recollects, with paintings added in the 20th century. One of the most outstanding of the many surviving church complexes in Bohol and remarkably well preserved. The 17th-century Jesuit church was converted into a major part of the three-story *convento*, the only one of its kind in the country. The 19th-century additions to the church include a bell tower, porticoes in the front façade and the funeral chapel. The complex is located on the banks of the picturesque Loboc River.

12. Luna, La Union—Paris Church of Santa Catalina de Alejandria, built in the 18th to 19th centuries by the Augustinians. This is the best-preserved church complex in La Union despite many additions and alterations made over the years. The sprawling *convento* has been converted into a school. During the colonial era, the shrine of Our Lady of Namacpacan was an important pilgrimage destination.

ORNATELY designed columns in vestibule of church in Dupax, Nueva Vizcaya built by the Dominicans

To be continued next week

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CITIBANK

Pop-cultural quotations

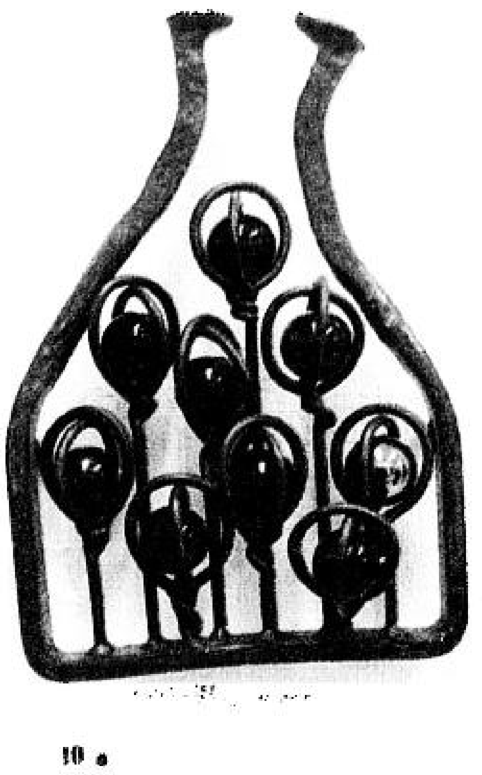
By Constantino C. Tejero

THREE fraternity *brods* from the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts have come together after years of hiatus from art-making. Though now over a decade older, they don't seem to have lost the freshness of ideas and playfulness of youth in their art as when they were still in school.

The three came up with strikingly different works in an exhibit titled "Version 3.01," held recently at the West Gallery in Glorietta 4, 3/L, Ayala Center, Makati City. (The title refers to this being the trio's second exhibit together, after "V. 3.0" held at the Optima Digital Studios last year.)

Luis Dindo Martinez, the youngest at 32, is a cinematographer, photographer, graphic artist. He majored in Editorial Design in college. He used to do figurative painting, such as nudes, before he went into photography and filmmaking.

Returning to painting three years ago, he found himself drawn to abstraction, perhaps because much of his energies and ideas for image-making have been channeled through his photographs and film work.


"MY TEARS IN THY BOTTLE" by Pete Jimenez

He was represented in the exhibit by four 3 ft x 4 ft and 4 ft x 4 ft pieces in acrylic on canvas, with titles bearing musical references: "Bowed Double Bass Notes" I and II, "Improvisations in G," "Sketches (Alternate Take)."

(Martinez says he gets his energies from music, particularly jazz and classical. He plays the guitar, bass, drums, though not professionally.)

The pieces are uniformly gray washes with whitish swirls, like passing mist, except for "Sketches," which is a mostly bluish-olive wash with vague amoebic forms. If this be music, it must be the blues.

"*Sa tingin ko, mas* fluid *ang* action, *ang* energy *na naki*-create *ko,* if I do it like that," Martinez says.

To what extent this fluidity goes is illustrated by an incident revelatory of his creative process. One night, after leaving an unfinished canvas in the garage where he was working, a stray dog came and defiled it. "The following day, it left on the canvas its footprints, its fur, including the *putik-putik*. So I just integrated them in my work, including the stench."

These washes are literally washing, that is, the gray produced when he washes his brushes, blending the various colors into a monochrome.

Chromatic colors, particularly loud ones, hardly appeal to him. "Definitely no green, no yellow direct from the tube. I don't know. *Ganyan ako, e.*"

Complex details

In direct contrast were the four quasi-abstract pieces of acrylic on canvas by Pablo Biglang-awa Jr., with their bold outlines, vivid hues and flamboyant forms. A computer graphics artist and TV commercial director, Biglang-awa majored in Visual Arts in college.

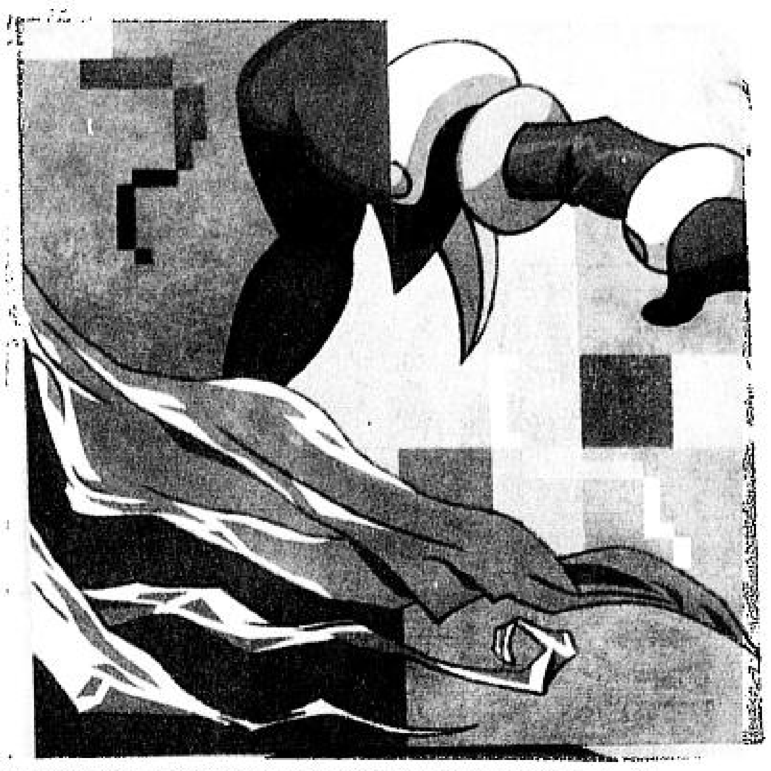
His "Fly-by Pod," 40" x 30", showing a shapeless spaceship and an unidentifiable creature with tentacles tipped with globules, illustrates a sci-fi world done with clean lines and bold coloration of yellow, maroon, electric blue, acid-green, red, violet, olive, slate, brown, as in a comic book.

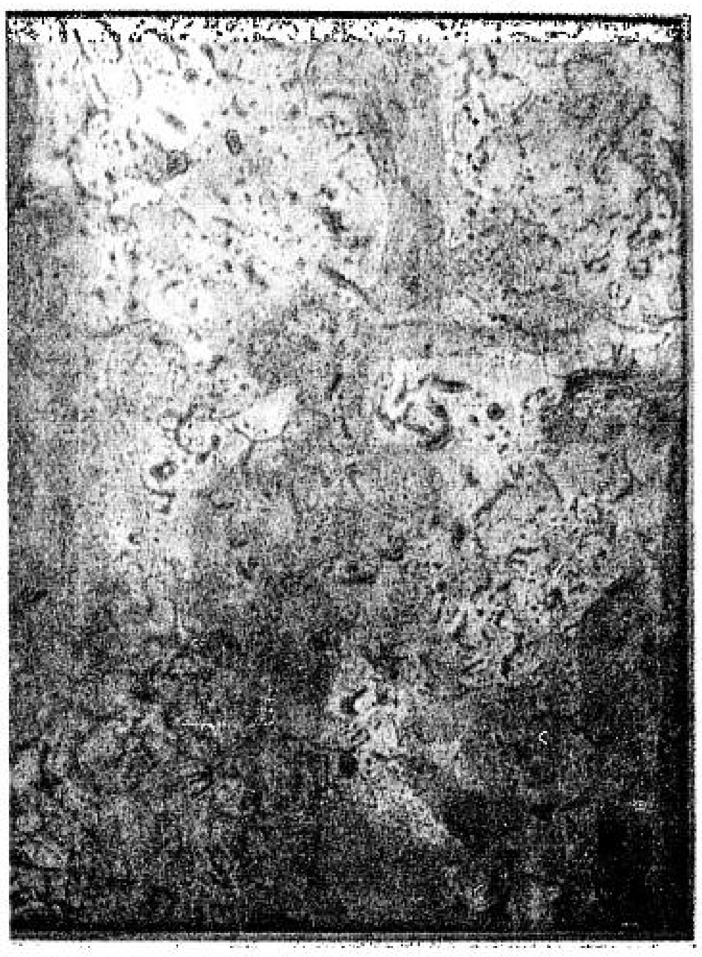
"Space Androgeny," 36" x 24", in yellow, brown, red, green, black, has a red gift-wrapping ribbon on a green space helmet. The superficiality of the tone and image is underscored by the flamboyance of the shapes and colors.

In "Gym Girl," 24" x 24", there must be a svelte figure somewhere, but the eyes are effectively blinded by the masses of red and black and streaks of blue, white, beige, purple.

The same with "Pixels & Appendages," 24" x

POP-CULTURAL/ p.D5


"PIXELS & APPENDAGES" by Pablo Biglang-awa Jr.


"SKETCHES (Alternate Take)" by Dindo Martinez

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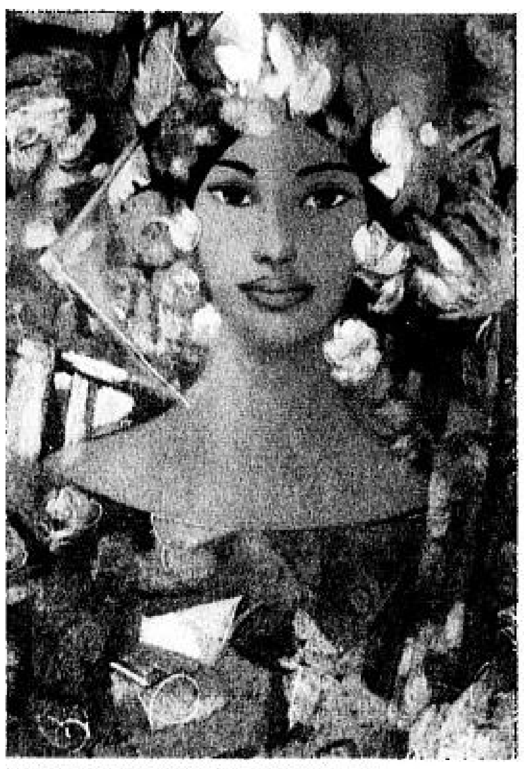
Orlina in Davao, Alegre at Denise, Tuesday Art Group at Visual Concepts

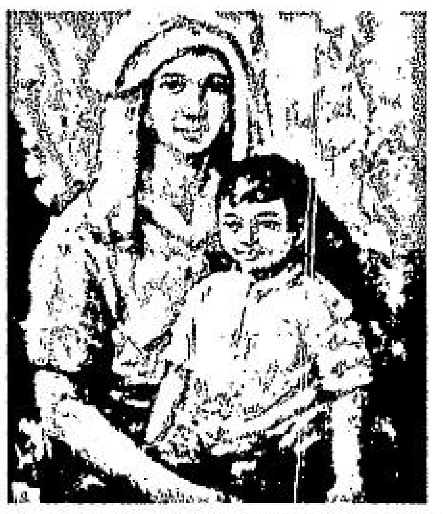


"HOMAGE TO BEAUTY" by Hermes Alegre at Gallerie Denise

VISUAL ARTS

RAMON Orlina will hold an exhibit at Genluna Gallery (12 General Luna St.) in Davao City dubbed "Glasscapes" on Nov. 20. The exhibit will showcase 15 stoic, dignified emerald cuts of art sculptures from arabesque to grotesque to celestial, the sizes ranging from 8 to 28 inches high. Call (082) 226-2104 or 2210296 or e-mail genluna@mozcom.com

ALEGRE AT GALLERIE DENISE. Hermes Alegre is holding his latest show, "Homage to Beauty," at Gallerie Denise (Unit 5-A, Kingswood Arcade, Kingswood Condominium Complex, corner Vito Cruz Extension and Pasong Tamo, Makati City). Call 0919-8490890 or--8951152.



"MAG-INA," oil, by Angel Cacnio, at Beluga Bar & Bistro and later, Visual Concepts Gallery

GROUP SHOW AT BELUGA BAR. Visual Concepts Gallery will mount "Sining sa Kamay ni Hesus," an art exhibit of the Tuesday Art Group on Nov. 20 at the Beluga Bar & Bistro, 225 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Reposo), Makati City. It will feature the works of 30 contemporary artists. It will be for the benefit of the construction of the Kamay ni Jesus Church and Healing Center in Bgy. Tinamnan, Lucban, Quezon. Rev. Fr. Joseph Faller and Tita Trillo, chair of the foundation, spearhead the project, conceptualized by Visual Concepts gallery owner Emilie Garcia. The show will run for three days after which it will be transferred to the newly opened Visual Concepts Gallery (580 Edsa, Malibay, Pasay City), where it will be exhibited until Dec. 12. Call 512-7800/ 7799.

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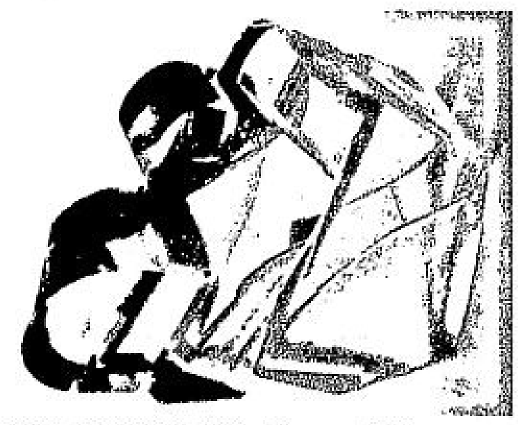

"INA AT ANAK 6" by Ramon Orlina

Pop-cultural quotations

(From page D4)

24", in green, violet, black, ochre, red, white, slate, olive, blue, where we try to look for recognizable body parts but see what could be spare parts of a monstrous machine.

These works have been influenced by Japanese animé, computer graphics and other media. The forms are from the architectural, scientific or experimental images of fly-by animation.

"They are digital illustration-based," says the artist. "I'm fascinated by the details in Japanese animation, its complex visual-making. It's more complex than that in Disney or Hollywood products."

Engrossed in his day job, he has been attempting to paint every four years. "*Nahirapan akong bumalik sa* first love *ko,*" he confides.

When he did return to his art recently, he carried over the characteristics and mannerisms of what he had been seeing and doing in his day job. "*Naaliw ako* in how to translate the real world into simple shapes, lines, colors. *Naaliw ako sa* combinations of colors."

The result is these extravagantly colorful creatures and machines in an industrial landscape.

Visual punning

Pete Jimenez's sculptures are natural-born products of this industrial landscape. His 10 sculptural pieces in the exhibit were playful figures made of found objects: rods and bars from junk shops, screws, padlocks, hasps, springs cut into loops and staples, a block of wood from an ancient church door, metal brackets from an old house in Pangasinan.

A multiawarded graphic artist, animator, computer graphics designer, and now the managing director of Optima Digital, Jimenez majored in Visual Communications in college. He used to carve objects from *molave*, until he learned metal could be malleable enough for his purpose.

"*Mas nagkakaroon ako ng* freedom to create from nothing," he says of his scrap work.

His visual punning is most playful in such pieces as "Andy Warhol," "Fido Dido" and "Mongolian Barbecue." The first, 11" x 12" x 10", is a solid cylinder with curly metal strips, which were actually part of a 1950s gate he cut up then welded together to allude to Warhol's famous mop. The second, 7" x 5" x 18", consists of mechanical nuts, bolts and twisted bars he gathered from a Meralco junkyard and assembled to form another famous mop.

In the third piece, 16" x 16" x 65", four square rods have been twisted to form the legs of a barbecue gridiron, which is actually a pickax in whose hole are arranged radially 15 yellow Mongol pencils. Thus, the title.

"Kiss Me," 8" x 3" x 16", a series of 11 staples vertically arranged on a thick rectangular metal plate with a big metal loop on top, refers to a third famous hairstyle. The artist would have titled it "Elvis."

The punning continues even when the theme is patently religious. "Crimson Stripes," 24" x 3" x 8", a block of old wood with cracks, nicks and blood-red streaks, encased in metal plate bordered by staples, then bound by crisscrossing aluminum wire, suggests the wounds of Christ after the Flagellation.

"My Tears in Thy Bottle," 9" x 3" x 13", is more literal in its illustration of a line uttered by David in one of his painful moments in the Book of Psalms. A square bar has been twisted to form the outline of a bottle, in which are nine ink-blue and poison-green marbles encased in twisted round rods.

It was a small but impressive exhibit. It ransacked pop culture and came up with something fresh. It intimated the wisdom of old masters yet still suggested the youthfulness of the avant-garde.

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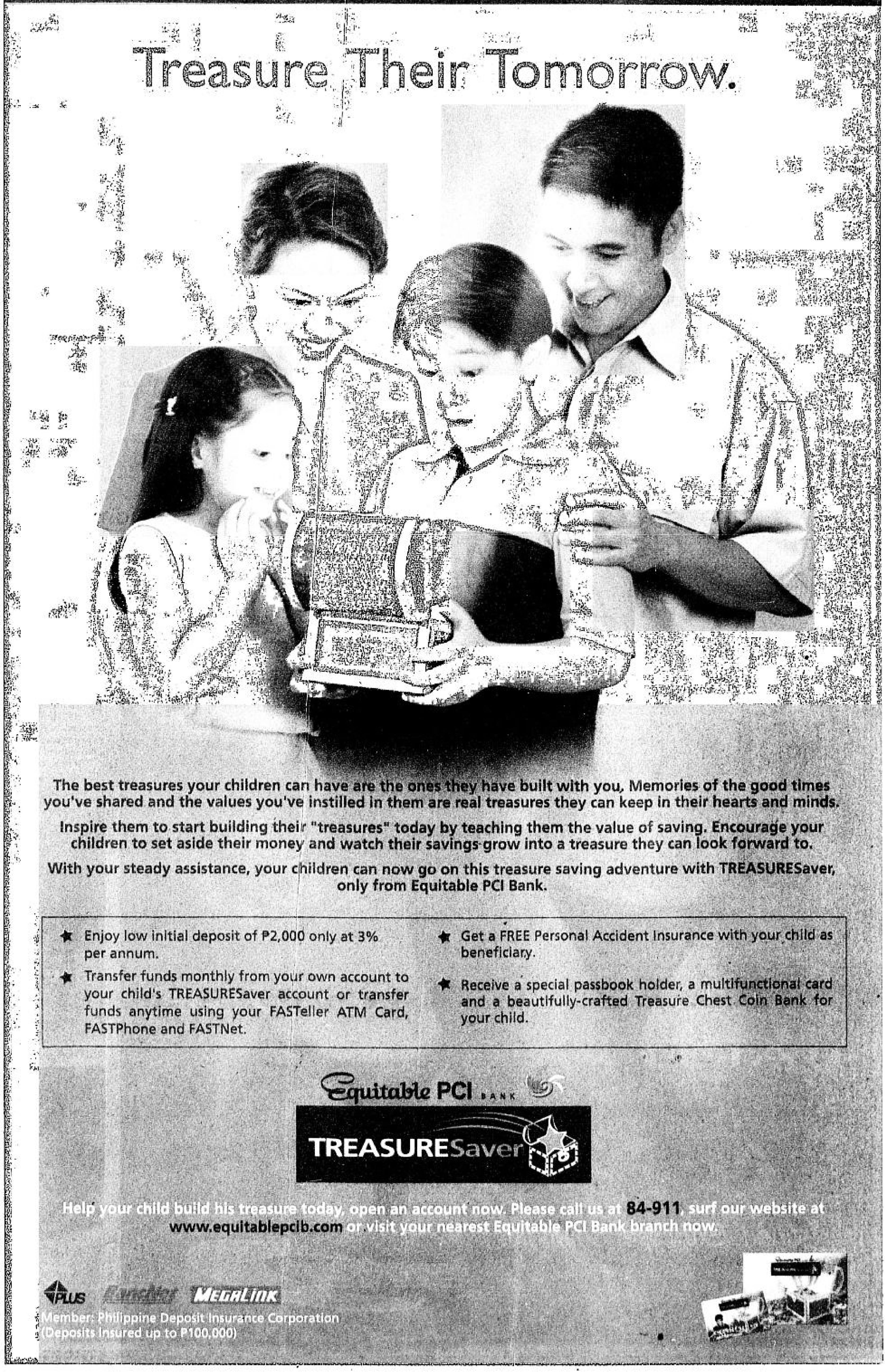

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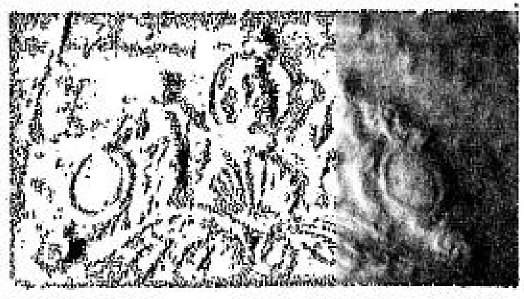
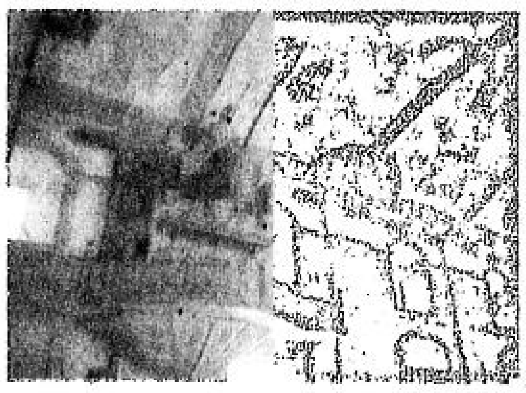
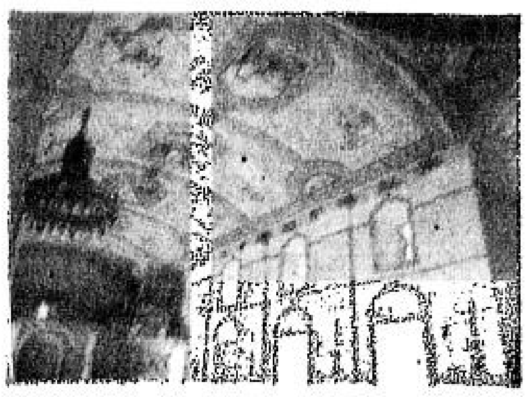


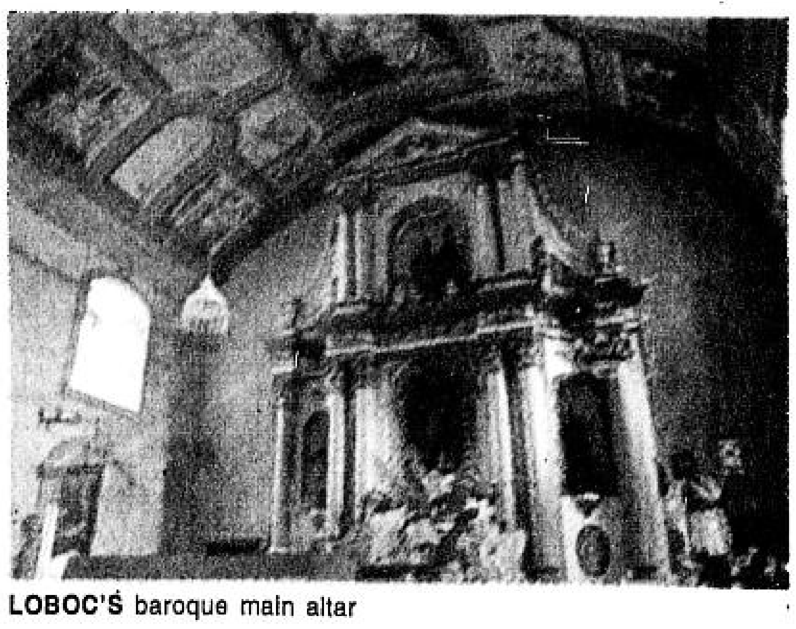
EXQUISITE bas relief in the Loboc Church



LOBOC'S pipe organ is under renovation.



LOFTY nave of Loboc Church gives off a sense of transcendence.



LOBOC'S baroque main altar

Bohol thrives in environmental and cultural splendor

The land of ancient churches and pristine beaches continues to attract cultural backpackers and environmental advocates

By James P. Ong

IF you are in Bohol and thinking brown, forget Chocolate Hills. Instead, why don't you hop to Panglao Island, a 30-minute drive from the capital Tagbilaran? There you will see people whose skins have turned chocolate brown from hours under the sun. And who can blame them? The island is a veritable paradise—beaches that boast of clean and fine white sand, and the clearest and bluest waters.

Not many know the secret that is Bohol's beaches. Panglao, for instance, is popular mainly among divers who use it as a base for when they go to nearby Balicasag Island, said to be second only to Tubbataha Reefs in grandeur, which in turn is only accessible from February to June because of violent sea conditions.

There are several beaches in Bohol and not all of them are developed. One of the more popular ones, Alona Beach, didn't even get a name until the 1970s, when the sexy actress Alona Alegre was shooting a movie there and showed off the first-ever bikini suit worn in the province! It was also in Panglao that Cesar Montano, whose parents hail from Bohol, shot the movie "Muro-Ami."

Recently, there was VJ and model Bianca Araneta, spokesperson for Nestea's "Love the Beach" campaign, which started September last year and entails going to different beach destinations to do underwater and coastal clean-ups. In Bohol, the clean-ups were held in Alona Beach in Panglao Island and Cainggit Beach in Tagbilaran.

Alona beach now

Today, Alona Beach has over 20 resorts and about half that many dive shops, and it is popular mainly among Europeans. "We also get some Japanese visitors, but they find the nightlife here too tame," says Jerry Lim, owner of Crystal Coast, one of the bigger resorts there. There are about four decent bars, and they stay open as long as there are customers nursing their San Miguels and picking on grilled fresh seafood.

The food here is priced mid-range, with breakfast averaging P120 and regular meals for about the same price, if not slightly cheaper. There aren't many restaurants to choose from, unlike in Boracay where there are, at least, near-authentic Indian and French places.

One of the better places to eat and drink is Oops! Bar, which is owned by Filipino, Swiss and English partners. Safety Stop, a tribute to divers, serves mostly German sausages and has a pool table. Alona Tropical serves excellent fresh fruit juices and the elusive brewed coffee.

Crystal Cove has the best view, since the resort itself is perched on top of a hill. From the open-air restaurant, one can enjoy the view of the beach, Bohol Sea, and nearby Siquijor. All these restaurants serve *kitong*, a delicious local fish.

In Alona, unlike in the other beaches in Panglao Island, you can find both cheap and expensive accommodations. Crystal Cove has over 40 air-conditioned rooms in a newly built building and charges about P1,500 a night. Alona Tropical's air-conditioned *bahay kubos* start at P800. The cheaper cottages can be found away from the beachfront and can be as cheap as P200 a day, with no air-conditioning.

There's no reason to be fussy about where you are staying, since you will be spending most of your time in the beach anyway. There you can get an hour's massage for P200. Amazingly, there are also shops where you can check your e-mail.

Art in the capital

Although you are going to Panglao to escape from the city, there may come a time when you would want to escape from the beach's quiet. There are minibuses that go to Tagbilaran from Alona every hour on the hour, from 6 a.m. until 4 p.m. If you are in a hurry or miss the bus, you can hire a motorcycle for a minimum fee.

There isn't much to do in the capital but enjoy looking at their big tricycles, painted with biblical quotations, and walk through the clean and orderly streets under the sweltering heat.

Definitely worth a visit is the home and studio of painter Nene Borja-Lungay, who graduated from UP Fine Arts Class of 1953 with the late Jose Joya and National Artist Napoleon "Billy" Abueva, also a fellow Boholano.

Painting became Lungay's second priority after she got married right after university. Today she still lives in the same house where she raised her nine children, near the river-end of H. Grupo Street.

A small section of the house has become her studio and, on the week we visited, she was busy preparing for an exhibit of old and new works in UP's Vargas Museum. She has been asked several times to exhibit there, but because she is busy with her family and still needs to contact collectors to borrow some of her old works, it's been postponed several times. If and when it is mounted, it will consist of around 40 pieces and be her first exhibit in Manila after graduating almost half a century ago.

Lungay is an indomitable lady who has also been holding summer art workshops for ages 5 and up in Bohol for 17 years now, and is called "Nana" by her students and grandchildren.

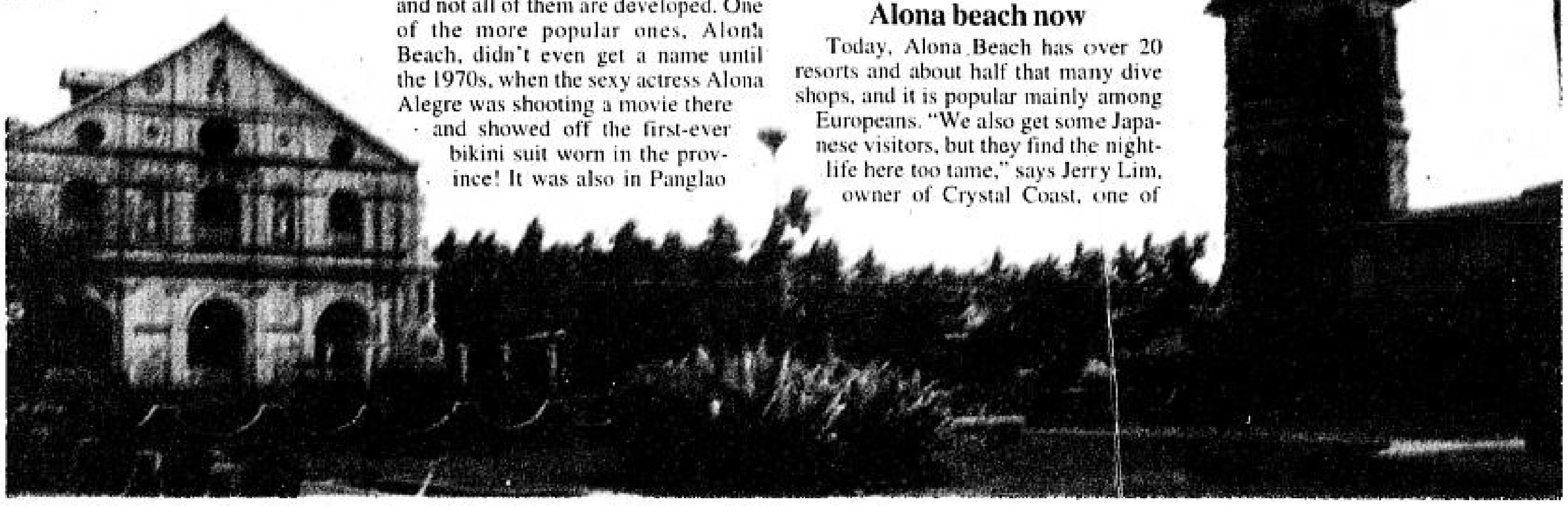
On the day we visited, she showed us works in watercolor, part of her *kinampay*, or purple yam, series. *Kinampay*, she says, is associated with the faith of the Boholanos—it is also one of the province's best-known delicacies.

It is also said in Bohol, according to Lungay, that if a child trips on the ground, you scold it. But if you accidentally drop *kinampay* on the floor, you have to pick it up and kiss it.

Old churches

From Tagbilaran, you can also ride buses or jeepneys to visit other Bohol towns. Some seven kilometers from the capital is Baclayon Church, one of the country's oldest, and built by the Jesuits in 1727. It has a museum that houses a rich collection of religious

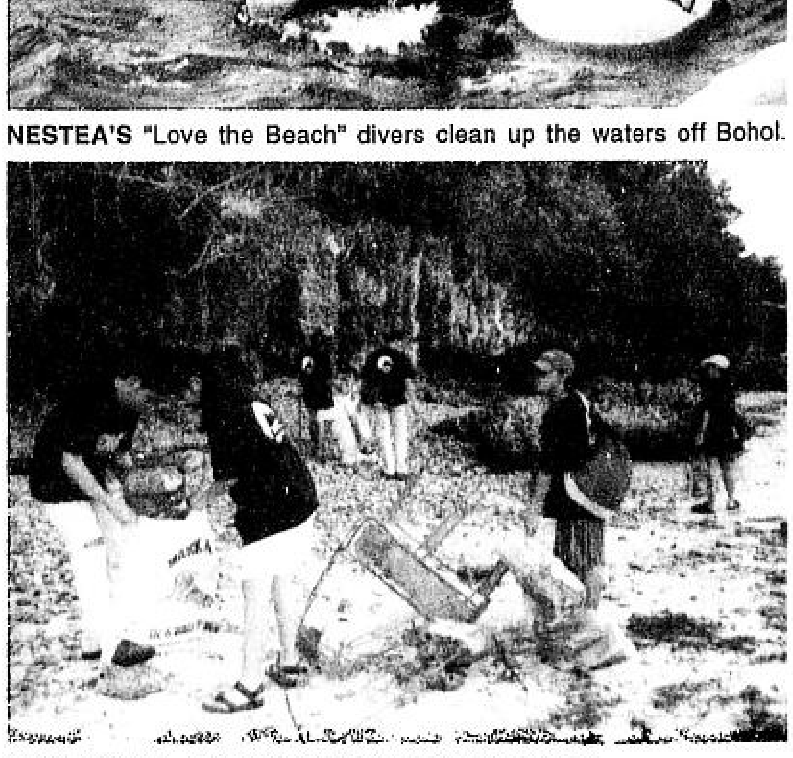
BOHOL/ p.D8



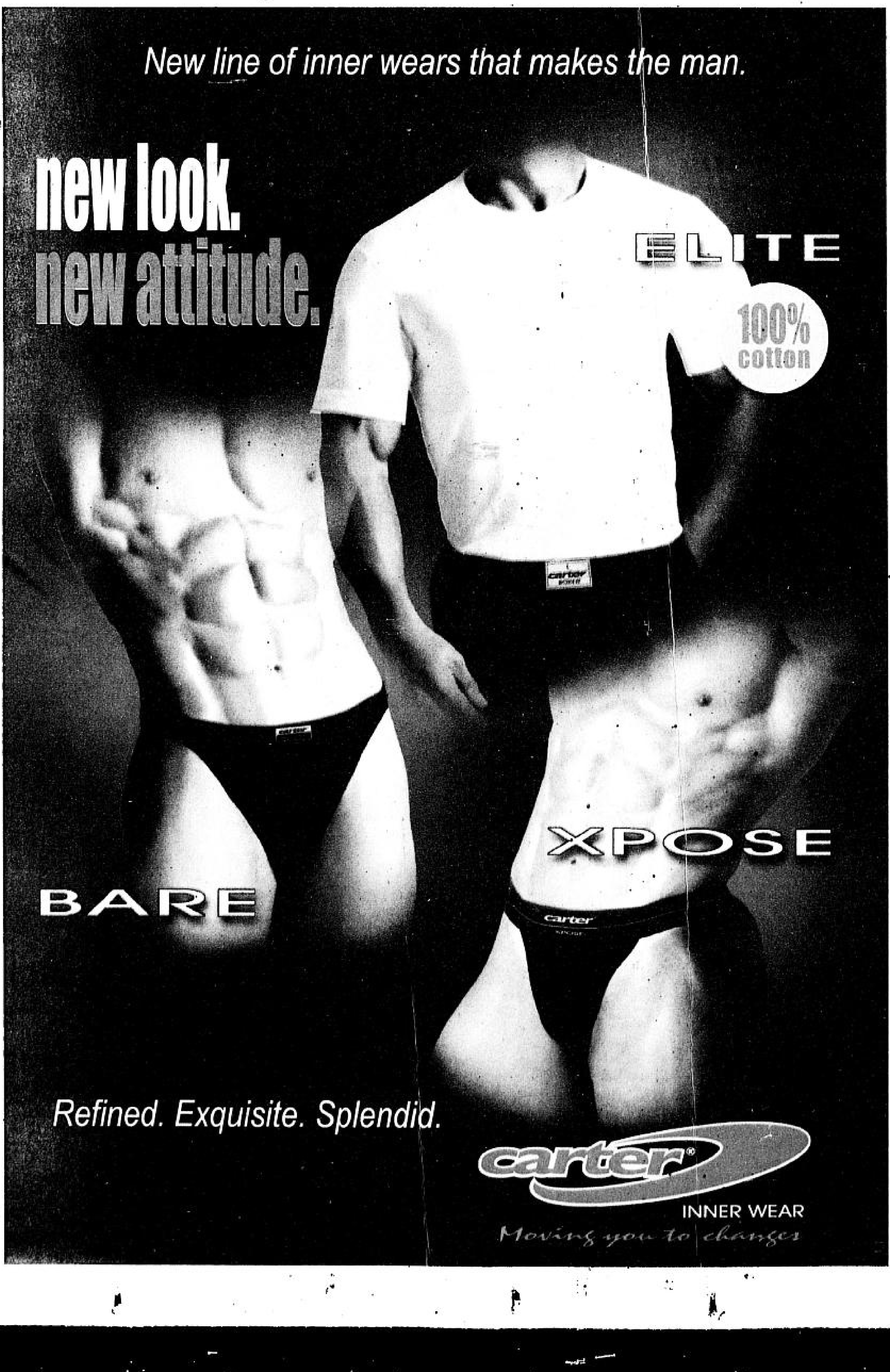
THE PARISH church of the apostles Saints Peter and Paul, a heritage structure

CHANNEL [V] VJ Bianca Araneta makes a pitch for Bohol ecology as spokesperson of Nestea's "Love the Beach" campaign.

NESTEA'S "Love the Beach" divers clean up the waters off Bohol.



ECOLOGICAL army combs the coast for garbage.



Everything's ready for grand annual Immaculada Concepcion procession

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

THE COFRADIA de la Inmaculada Concepcion with the Intramuros Administration have for the past 20 years been holding a grand procession of images bearing the different titles of the Blessed Virgin on the first Sunday of December. The Cofradia headed by Imelda Cojuangco as founding chair and Aurora Eizmendi as president see to it that the Blessed Virgin is honored on this day to mark the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Branches of the AFP, the Philippine Navy, the Philippine Marines head the procession in keeping with the tradition during Spanish times when the military at that time honored the Virgin on her feast on Dec. 8 as Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception.

It is a beautiful sight seeing the Virgin so honored by military men because isn't she, after all, their mother?

Secretary Richard Gordon, who has been named *hermano de honor* of the fiesta, together with Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, will see to it that all the streets around Intramuros will be lighted during the procession from the Manila Cathedral. Before the procession, a solemn High Mass will be officiated by Tuguegarao Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan at 2:30 p.m. on Dec. 2. The UP Singing Ambassadors will sing during the Mass.

The *hermano mayor* this year is businessman Oscar Violago and the company Cal Energy. The fiesta committee in charge includes Ado Escudero, Clifford Chua, Jun Pablo, Tony Adriano, Deiy Arionday, Danny Dolor and Allan Tengco.

The pilgrim image of Our Lady of Piat is joining the Marian procession. She will arrive in Manila on Nov. 26 and will be enshrined at the Sto. Domingo Church. It will go to Malate Church on Dec. 1 for the Mass by Archbishop Talamayan at 4 p.m.

Aureo Alonzo will dress her up for the Marian procession on Dec. 2. After the procession, the image will be brought again to Malate Church where she will stay until Dec. 9 and will be brought to the airport after the 4 p.m. Mass.

The following day, Dec. 3 at 6 a.m., the replica image of Our Lady of Manaoag will arrive in Lourdes Church in a procession from Santa Clara Street corner Kanlaon Street for the 6:30 a.m. Mass. The image will stay until Dec. 9. A Rosary vigil will honor her on Dec. 7.

Confraternities of Our Lady of Lourdes are invited to join the procession on Dec. 2. The pilgrim image of Our Lady of Lourdes will join the procession.

Expected to arrive from other places are Our Lady of Turumba from Pakil, Laguna; Our Lady of La Salette from Silang, Cavite; and Nuestra Señora de Soledad de Porta Vaga from Cavite City.

Triduu of Masses

A TRIDUUM of Masses in honor of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception will take place Nov. 27-29 at 6 p.m. at the Pamantasan ng Maynila Chapel in Intramuros. Everybody is invited. On Dec. 1 at 2 p.m., 400 graders from San Diego Elementary School and Batasan Hills Elementary School will receive their First Communion at the Manila Cathedral.

Correctional for Women

ONE of the Cofradia's apostolates is the Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong City. At least 850 women will benefit from gift packages prepared by a Cofradia committee headed by Eizmendi and Corinna Caparas for the Dec. 6 Christmas party.

Our Lady of Biglang-Awa of Marinduque

THE PATRONESS of Marinduque, Our Lady of Biglang-Awa, should be joining the procession, but there were fears it might suffer wear and tear during its voyage from Boac by boat. I am putting out her picture here, so you will know how she looks like.

Our Lady of Biglang-Awa is known for her miracles. One particular miracle was when Justina Manabay of Boac who was completely blind was given back her sight. Known as Tandang Uste, the woman when she was 35 in 1897 promised that she would serve the Mother of Biglang-Awa by praying day and night to her.

She put up a small hut in front of the church facing the niche of the Virgin which was put there in the 17th century by the people in commemoration of their victory against the Moros at that time through Our Lady's intercession.

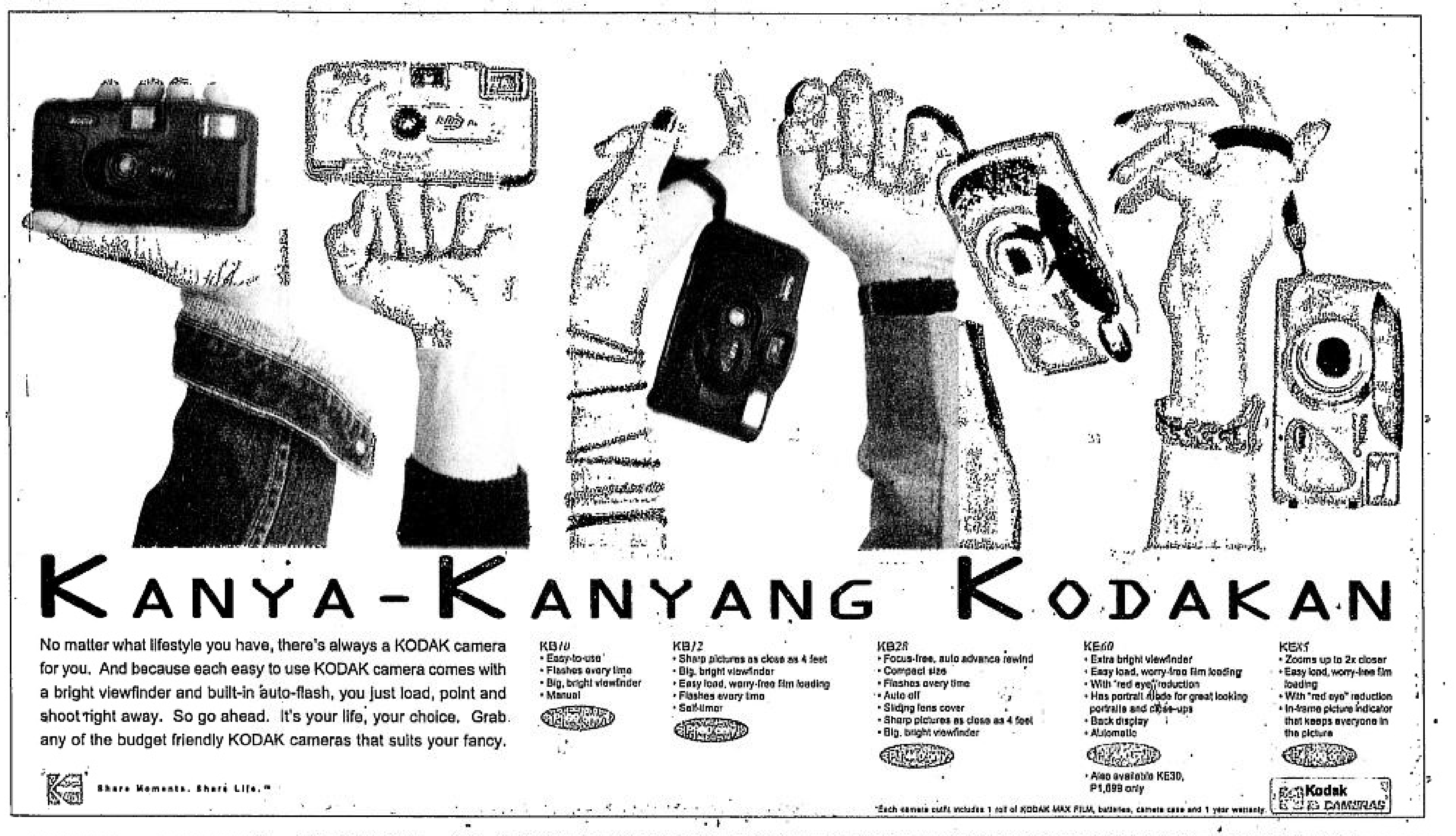
And so it was that people would stop in front of the church to pray the "Angelus" in the evenings. Across this was the hut of Tandang Uste. When she was 60 years old in 1918 she received back her sight.

The present *recamadera* of the Virgin of Biglang-Awa is Ester Madrigal-Catral whose mother,

EVERYTHING'S/ p.D8

OUR Lady of Biglang-Awa, patroness of Marinduque

COFRADIA Comite de Festejos: Tony Adriano and Ado Escudero; (back) Jun Pablo, Deij Arionday, Danny Dolor, Allan Tengco and Clifford Chua



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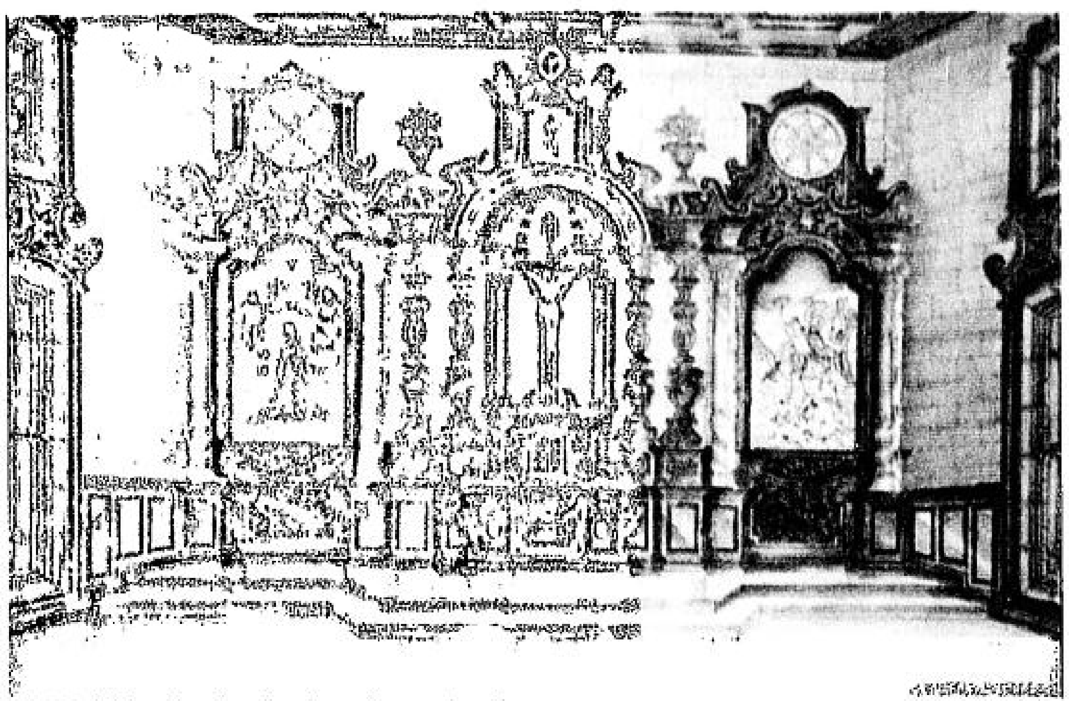
Marilao church launches renovation fund drive

THE EXECUTIVE committee of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Marilao, Bulacan has launched a fund campaign to finance the renovation of the church. Together with Fr. Abe Santos, parish priest, the chairpersons of the project, Mauro "Ogie" Villamar and Edna Ramos, are asking natives of Marilao and other friends to help in the project.

Estimated to cost P10 million, the renovation will include the roof, altar and floors.

Church interiors designer Tony Adriano will do the altar restoration. The design focuses on the Christ Crucified at the center with the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the left and the image of St. Michael on the right.

According to Adriano, on the top of the dome is a niche enshrining the Resurrected Christ with the White Dove on top of it symbolizing the Holy Spirit.


TONY Adriano's plan for the altar restoration

The high baroque design uses curved forms, instead of straight structural lines. The walls are planned with underlining curves. Columns are thirsted into spirals below. Scrolls and serpentine pediments are broken into two and each half faces toward. High reliefs of religious groups are modelled and colored in a lifelike style framed in fanciful architectural detail and lit by natural and artificial means that makes them look animated.

Adriano says, "A theatrical and scenic effect is my first requirement in my overall design for this altar."

St. Michael Church started as a small chapel that was put up by Padre Vicente de Talavera on April 21, 1796 when the town and parish of Marilao were put up. It was made bigger in 1848; it got burned in 1899 during the Phil-American War. It was rebuilt in 1902 and put back to its original big edifice in 1922. It was finished under Fr. Jose M. Salas. This is the first time in 50 years that the church will be renovated.

Bohol thrives in environmental and cultural splendor

(From page D6)

memorabilia—from old musical notes to vestments to *santos*.

The renovation of Baclayon Church has been put on hold following funding problems that worsened after the transfer to the current Arroyo administration. The story is complicated, but Fr. Milan Ted Torralba, one of Bohol's most ardent advocates of historical and cultural preservation, is hopeful the project will soon resume.

There are 15 heritage churches in Bohol and it is no wonder these churches' collections of *santos* are being stolen every other week and find new homes in antique shops in Manila or private collectors in exclusive subdivisions.

A city council officer we talked to was careful to say that the thieves are not from Bohol but from a nearby province. Torralba himself says he knows who the people are, or at least knows where the *santos* end up in.

There have been many instances when the diocese has had to buy back these priceless religious figures from antique shops, he says. But Torralba also remembers one instance when a well-known collector gave him back a *santo*, which he had bought for P250,000, after learning that it was recently stolen.

A bit further from Tagbilaran is the old stone church of Loboc, which was awarded P2 million by the National Historical Institute. The first step undertaken has been the repair of its old pipe organ, now being fixed in Las Piñas. There is also an interesting museum right in the church grounds.

Bohol's many churches are also the focus of Ricky Trota Jose's newest book, "Visita Iglesia Bohol," which will be launched during the Bohol Travel Mart in SM Megamall on the last week of November.

Organizers of the travel fair say the main focus will be Panglao Island, but don't let that stop you from scheduling a road trip to the rest of Bohol, one of the most unexplored and underrated places in the country.

Everything's ready . . .

(From page D7)

Asuncion B. Madrigal, was saved from a raging storm on Nov. 14, 1942. Due to lack of suitable water transportation, Madrigal boarded a sailboat from Cotta, Lucena. With her were 12 other passengers.

In the evening they were caught by a strong storm. The fear-stricken passengers prayed hard to Our Lady of Biglang-Awa. Miraculously, they reached the shore of Boac at dawn. Nov. 14 was at the time the last day of the novena to the Virgin.

It is said that passengers in other sailboats drowned. In thanksgiving, Madrigal took care of the image, especially preparing her for her fiesta, which falls on the second Sunday of November. Nowadays, fiesta is celebrated in Boac on May 10 because most Boac devotees who live in Manila go to Boac in the summer especially in May.

Our Lady of Biglang-Awa Foundation composed of Metro Manila residents, including Marinduque Gov. Carmencita Reyes, celebrates her feast in November, which took place this year at the St. Paul's Seminary Chapel in Makati.

Those who wish for a novena can write me. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped enveloped for easier mailing.

'Handog ng Eukaristia sa Mahihirap'

THE CATHOLIC Church, through the Plenary Council of the Philippines II, has opted to be a church of, for and with the poor. As Tuguegarao Archbishop Talamayan is finishing his nine-year term as CBCP chair of the Permanent Committee on Eucharistic Congress, he will preside over a Eucharistic concelebrated mass at the Sta. Cruz Church on Nov. 23 at 10 a.m. Zamboanga Archbishop Carmelo DF Morelos, D.D., incoming chair of the committee, will concelebrate.

After the Mass, to which all the poor, street children, beggars in Sta. Cruz and Quiapo areas have been invited, lunch will be served. It will be followed with games with prizes, socializations. Gifts will also be distributed to the poor. Coordinating this event are Fr. Kit Mendoza, parish priest of Sta. Cruz; Rev. Fr. Mike Garcia, SSS, and Dr. Telly Somera, treasurer and executive secretary, respectively of the sponsoring CBCP Eucharistic Committee.

Marian exhibit in Marikina

OUR Lady of Abandoned Parish in Marikina City will hold a Marian exhibit on Nov. 26 to Dec. 7. Under the auspices of the Alay Kay Maria Foundation, the exhibit will open at 4 p.m. and the Mass will be celebrated at 5 p.m. with Msgr. Arnel Lagarejos as celebrant. Sponsors are Imelda Cojuangco, Ado Escudero, Purita Gancayco de los Angeles, Aureo Alonzo, Corazon Castro, Romeo de la Paz, Nora Petel, Helen Cua and myself. The *hermanos mayores* are Tony Trinidad and Doris Sto. Domingo. Exhibit is open to the public.

Where is Chapel of St. Lucy?

I AM looking for a chapel or church of St. Lucy in Bulacan. Those who know can beep me at 141-020543. Thank you very much. St. Lucy is the patroness of good eyesight.

Book on Blessed Calungsod

SARINA Pasricha wrote a book that includes the life of Blessed Pedro Calungsod. This is part of her thesis, which she will defend on Nov. 23 at the Asian Institute of Management.

Blessed Hannibal's relic arrive

THE PILGRIM heart of Blessed Hannibal di Francia, founder of the Rogationist order, will arrive in Manila on Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. It will be brought to the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Multinational Village in Parañaque and stay there until Nov. 25, except Nov. 21.

SCA alumni reunion

ALL Student Catholic Action alumni will gather at Pope Pius Catholic Center on UN Avenue, Paco on Nov, 24 at 2 a.m. for the first general reunion.

Interfaith service in Bel-Air

PEOPLE of all faiths will gather at the Bel-Air Multicovered Court on Solar Street on Nov. 23, at 6:30 p.m. The interfaith prayer service centers on "Accepting Each Other." Call Glo at 897-1856.

Cardinal Arinze at St. Andrew Parish

CARDINAL Arinze of the Vatican will say Mass at St. Andrew Parish in La Huerta, Parañaque on Nov. 25, feast of Christ the King, at 10 a.m.

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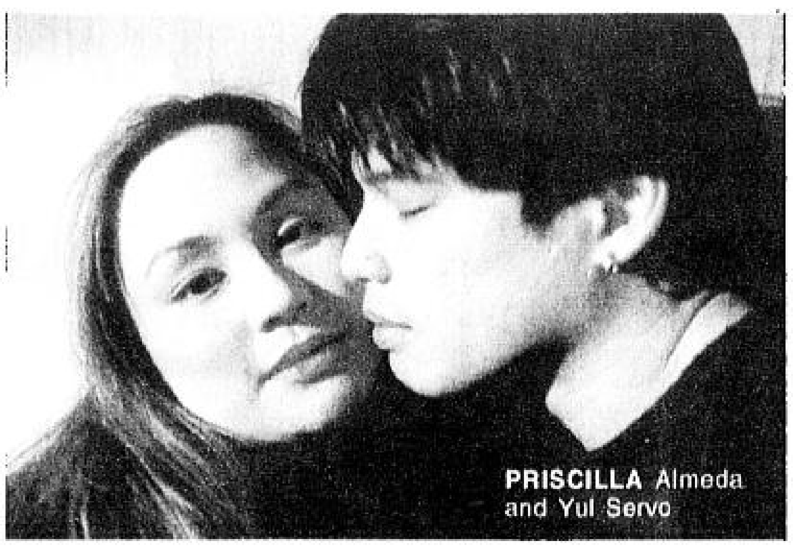

PRISCILLA Almeda and Yul Servo

Is the Philippines ready for a five-hour Pinoy movie?

'Batang West Side,' the newest film of maverick filmmaker Lav Diaz, will open the third annual Cinemanila International Film Festival

By Lav Diaz

BATANG West Side" is five hours long.

For many this is an issue. A huge issue, and a headache to many here in the Philippines. But not an issue if we remember that there are small and large canvases; brief ditties and lengthy arias; short stories and multivolume novels; the haiku and "The Iliad." This should be the end of the argument.

It's too long, people can't take it; it's too heavy, people can't handle it; distributors won't pick it up, theaters won't screen it. Wrong. There are theaters that will accept this film. People will watch long films. I believe the masses have the ability to transcend the standards they normally use in apprehending the arts. Allow works of proportion and beauty to exist, and we will develop an audience with lofty enough and profound enough philosophies to properly appreciate the art of cinema. People will watch and enjoy "Batang West Side." Theaters will open with this film.

This I firmly believe. And, in fact, it is this film's initial triumph to be the opening film in the 3rd Cinemanila International Film Festival this December.

I never intended to make "Batang West Side" five hours long. I simply followed the cutting and joining together of various scenes according the script I shot. The original script, titled "West Side Avenue, JC" (Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature winner, 1997), was 135 pages long, with 126 scenes. A revised copy (year 2000) that I shot reached a hundred pages and 208 scenes.

I thought the film would run three hours, but during editing I saw that it would run longer. I didn't try to alter this condition; I allowed it to flow naturally. I allowed it to become organic, to acquire a life of its own; this is my philosophy when cutting, when finishing a film. I don't bend to the conventions of editing, or of length; I refuse to follow the dictates of industry. No manipulation has been done to force me to conform to tradition, to what has been done before. I've studied the length many times in order to change it, but the five-hour version remains solid—according to the dictates of aesthetics, story flow and wholeness of vision. I refuse to compromise the integrity of the work to please limiting, emasculating "tra-

IS/ p.E4

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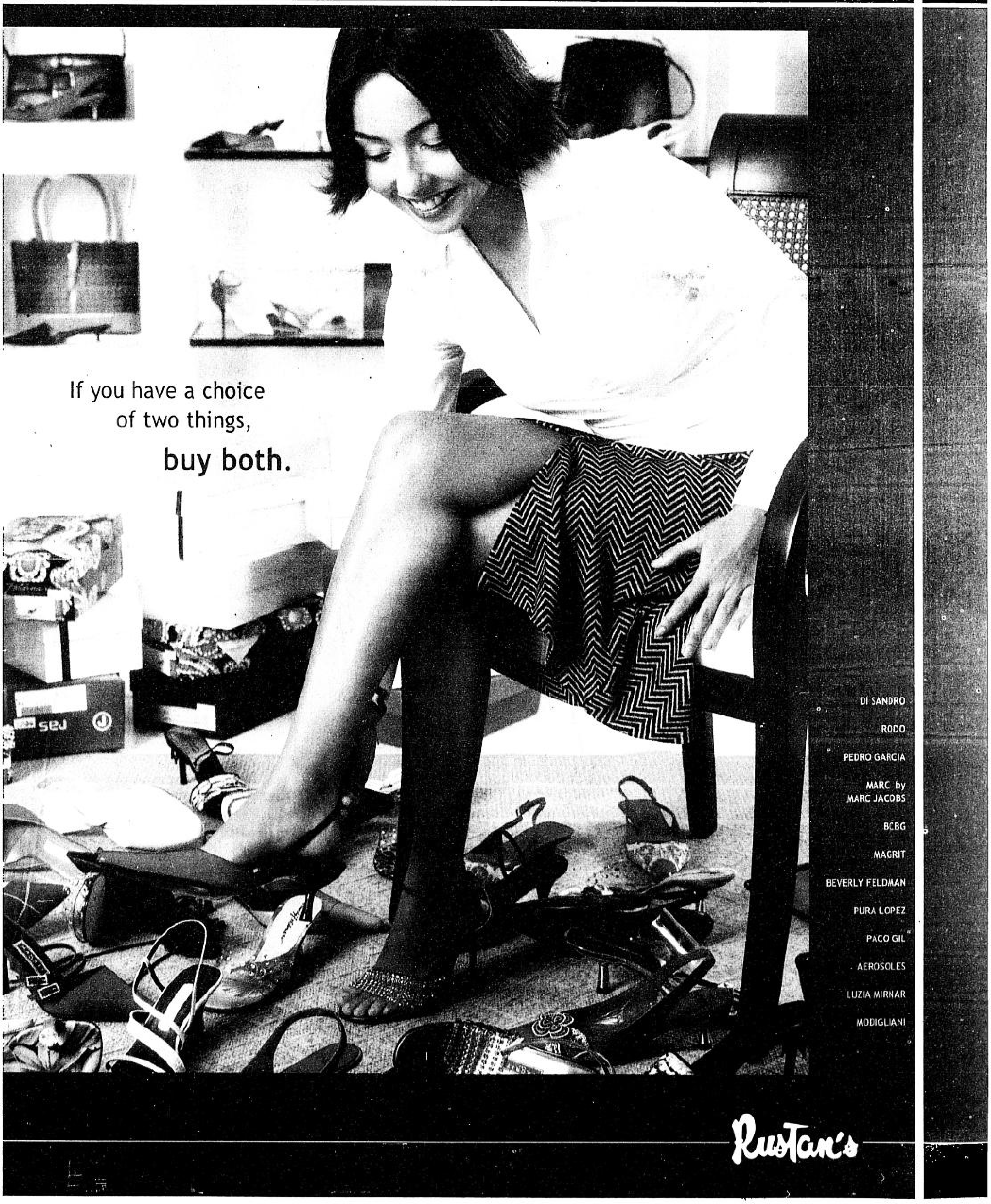
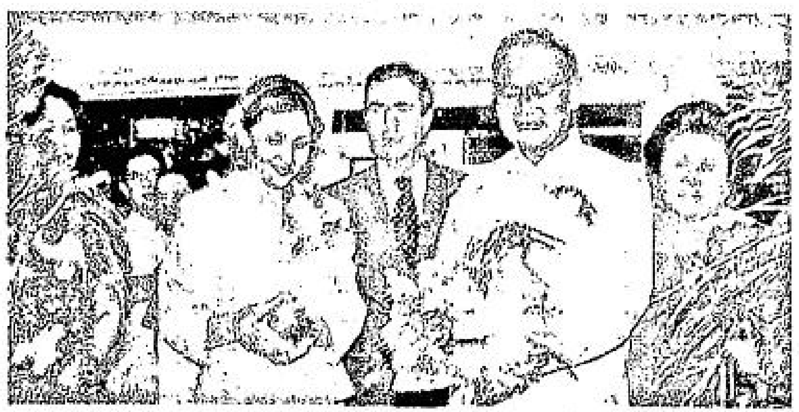


NARDA Camacho with Hans Kasten and Florenda Kasten

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

AUSTRIAN Ambassador Christian Krepela, Marie Alegrado, Julie Alegrado, Austrian honorary consul-general in Cebu Arcadio Alegrado and Austrian embassy first secretary Harald Ulbrich



ARANZAZU Bañon, Ambassador Tomas Pantoja, Jaime Laya and Rosalina Concepcion

Narda Camacho, feisty letter writer to shameless lawmakers, marks birthday

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

NARDA Camacho's birthday bash had a Caribbean theme, complete with banana trees atop tables and rare shells from Thailand (executed by Narda's daughters, **Marissa** and **Chacha**), but sans Harry Belafonte. Most of the guests were relaxed enough to come as they pleased.

Sinecure of all eyes was **Blas Ople**'s seeming *bete noire*, Finance Secretary **Lito Camacho** and the lovely **Kim** in a pleated pumpkin orange gown. Kim, as you all know, is Sotheby's rep here. The spotlight also fell on Central Bank's **Paeng Buenaventura** and the talented **Marivic**, whose painting show you can catch at the Pen. Sen. **Manny** and Rep. **Cynthia Villar** arrived, reminding guests of that memorable moment just last year when we thought our problems were over.

Five friends—**Tereret Liboro, Nori Ongsiako, Cez Manalo, Fortune Ledesma** and **Evie Costa**—entertained guests with traditional calypso dances with all kinds of intricate steps. There was "Oh, No It's **Johnny**" entertaining a whole table of guests and Singapore Ambassador and Mme. **Jackie Foo**, Chilean Ambassador **Carmen Lynam** as well as Swedish Ambassador and Mme. **Ulf Hakansson**, Iraqi Ambassador and Mme. **Salah Al-Samarmad, Paz Yuchengco** with **Lulu Castañeda** and **Thelma Gana**, who's in the midst of preparing for the FCCP ball come Nov. 23.

* * *

The National Archives celebrated its 100th anniversary and the launch of the paper conservation laboratory under the RP-Spain modernization of the archives project with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. Spanish Ambassador **Tomas Pantoja**, NCCA chair Dr. **Jáime Laya** and Mme. **Aranzazu Bañon** of the Spanish embassy cut the ribbon. Rumors are the NCCA will be reorganized just to please a certain party who for reasons no one understands covets the chairmanship.

* * *

In the mean time, Austria's gracious ambassador, Dr. **Christian Krepela**, hosted an elegant national day reception at his residence in Makati. Ambassador Krepela together with Russian Ambassador **Anatoli Khmelnitski**, the acting dean of the diplomatic corps, and Foreign Undersecretary **Franklin Ebdalin** led the ceremonial toast.

A sumptuous buffet of Austrian specialties and sweets, such as *sachertorte*, *linsertorte*, *mohr im hemd*, *erdbeerjalousie*, *apfel* and *topfen strudel* were prepared by Mandarin Oriental's own executive chef, **Norbert Gandler**, and enjoyed by Don **Jaime** and **Bea Zobel de Ayala**, Turkish Ambassador **Veka Inal**, Netherlands Ambassador **Theo Arnold**, Mexican Ambassador **Enrique** and **Marianna Hubbard**, Danish Ambassador **Peter** and **Brigitta Rosting**, Italian Ambassador **Umberto** and **Clara Colesanti**, Venezuelan Ambassador **Milena Ramirez** and others of that ilk.

* * *

Just for kicks the next time they're held, you should drop by these exhibits of wine (and other produce, of course, like olive oil, vinegar, olives) like the "Taste of Spain—Muestra de Alimentos y Bebidas" at the Shangri-La ballroom. Held on Nov. 8, the exhibit featured Spanish companies exporting wine and industrial food machinery as well.

There you are, with the whole day ahead of you, trying out 10 different types of wine. Needless to say, they were all very good, particularly the Reservas. Ambassador Pantoja was one of the special guests who arrived together with **Oscar Via**, economic and commercial counselor of the embassy.

***

In last week's piece, the name of Saudi Arabian Ambassador **Saleh Mohammad Al-Ghamdi** was misspelled. Our apologies.

MAKATI Rep. Teddyboy Locsin and journalist Glenn Gale during a reception at the residence of French Ambassador Gilles Chouraqui.

SECRETARY and Ms Jose Isidro Camacho

CRIS Millado, Robert Burley, CCP president Nestor Jardin, Canadian Ambassador Robert Collette, Fernando Josef and Dennis Marasigan

Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal performs at CCP

KNOWN for its "sexy choreography, indefatigable dancers and purposeful programming," the world-renowned Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal will perform again at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo (main theater) on Nov. 23, 8 p.m., and Nov. 24, 3 p.m.

The show is a collaboration between the CCP and the Canadian Embassy with Manulife Phils., Bank of Commerce, Telus and KPMG Consulting (Canada). Their Asian tour is made possible with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada and the Conseil des Arts et des lettres du Québec and the Bank of Commerce.

The performance will be the highlight of a week-long celebration in Manila of a series of Canadian events titled 'A Glimpse of Canada,'" said Canadian Ambassador Robert Collette. "This celebration and the performances of Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal highlight the growing cultural exchanges and the bonds of friendship between Canada and the Philippines."

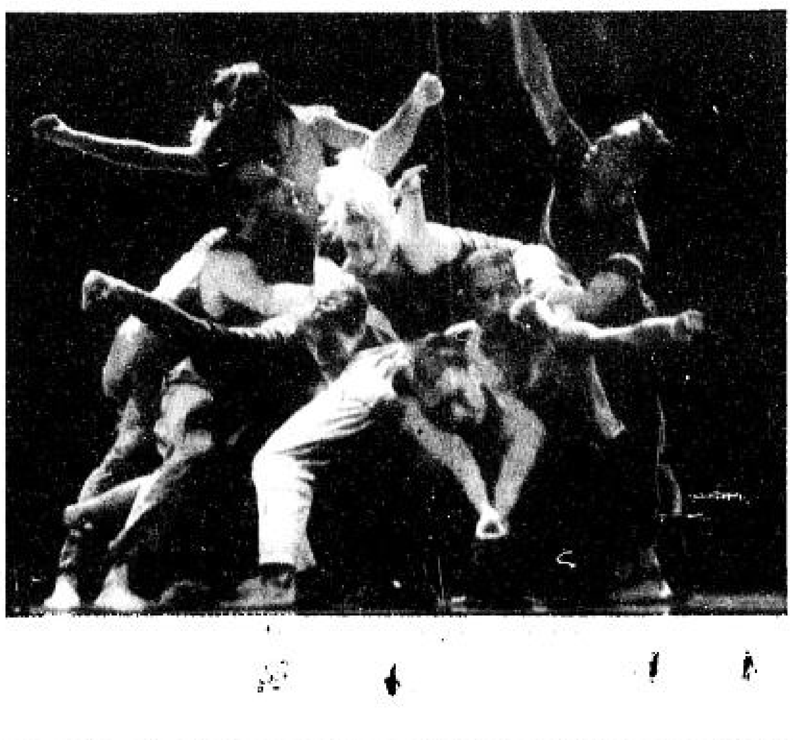
The 13-member company is under the artistic direction of internationally recognized dancer Louis Robitaille. Founded in the 1970s in Canada by dancer-choreographer Geneviéve Salbaing, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal specializes in classical, contemporary and jazz dance.

The group's first full-scale production, presented on a cross-Quebec tour, became a rousing success, which led to the founding of this renowned ballet company. Since then, the troupe has won the admiration of nearly two million spectators in 58 countries. Its varied upbeat tempo, innovative and contemporary program as well as its flawless and phenomenal technique, has wowed audiences around the world.

Repertoire for their performances consists of "Two Dances for Jane" choreographed by Crystal Pite, an excerpt from "Blue Until June" choreographed by Trey McIntyre, Patrick Delcroix's "Sous le rythme," Jason Shipley-Holmes' "clin d'oeil," "No Strings Attached" choreographed by Mia Michaels, and Crystal Pite's "Short Works: 23."

Tickets for the evening performances range from P800 to P1,500. Discounts at 50 percent for students and members of the ballet dance companies, and 20 percent for senior citizens are available.

Call the CCP Performing Arts Department at 832-3657, 832-1125 local 1604 and 1605; CCP Marketing Department at 832-3681/3878, 551-7930, 832-1125 local 1800 to 1806; CCP Box Office at 832-3704, 832-1125 local 1409, and Ticketworld at National Bookstore outlets at 891-5610/5743.



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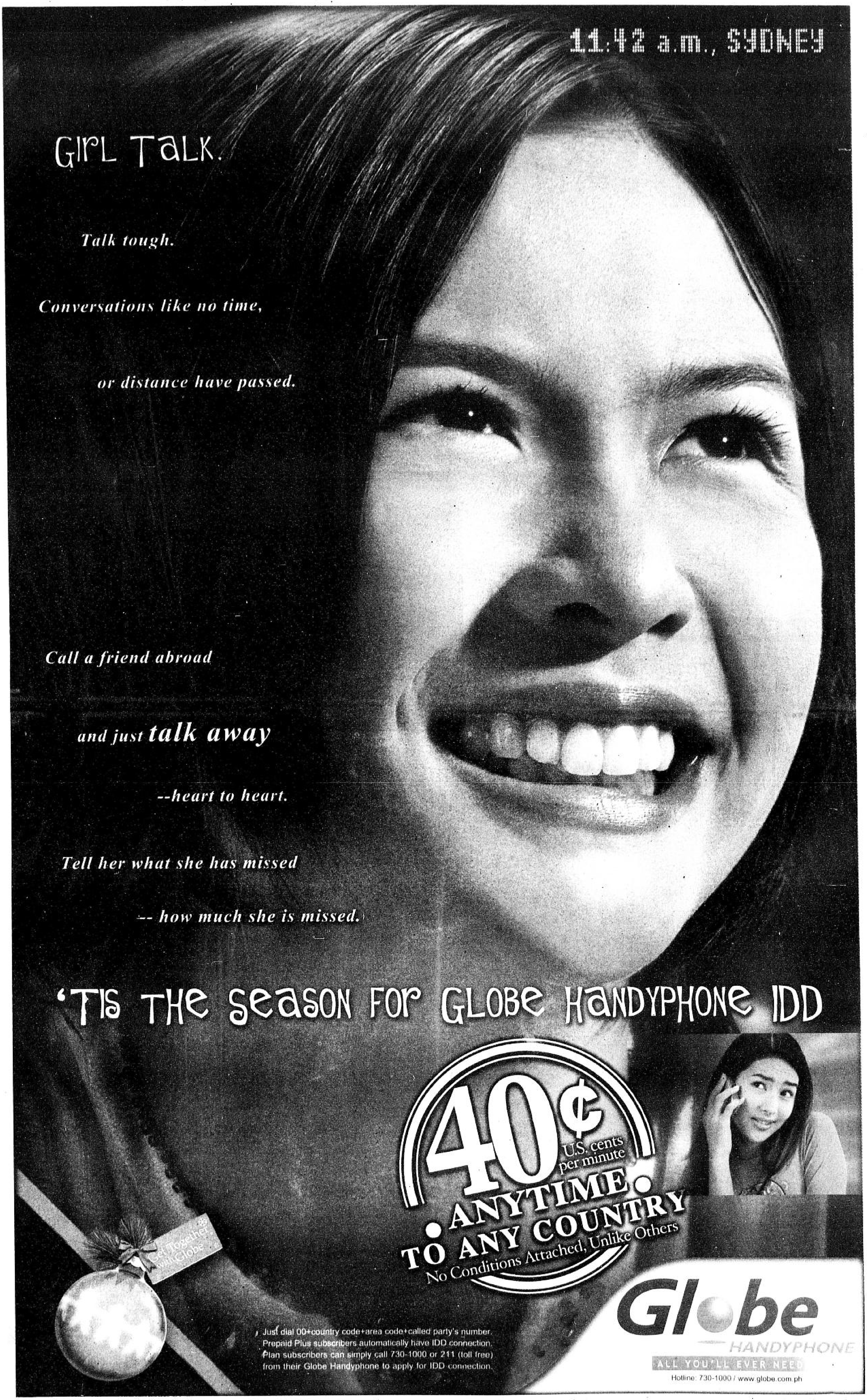
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Is the Philippines ready for a five-hour Pinoy movie?

(From page E1)

dition."

I explained my position to the producers. After many discussions, discourses and debates that at times led to raised voices and heated arguments, they finally relented, finally believed. They understood that they must not give short shrift to our vision, to abandon our responsibility; that after everything we've gone through and struggled against to finish the film, it would be a great wrong to compromise now. It would be a betrayal of those who sacrificed so much, so long to compromise—a betrayal of the film, which has acquired a life of its own.

No illusions

The film has no illusions. We have no intention of bragging that we are special. We simply wish to contribute to the development and growth of the long awaited new direction of Philippine cinema. We wish to help (even just a little) in its overthrow and ultimate change.

At the same time, we are also unafraid to create a different impression among people; it's all part of the process. The Philippines has been left too far behind in world cinema (meaning not Hollywood but world cinema, where can be found the startling new works of Iranian and Taiwanese filmmakers). It is a new age, and we need courage to innovate and create. We need to begin developing a national cinema, a cinema that will help create a responsible Filipino people.

That is the vision that inspired "Batang West Side."

It's not just the length. Some will express surprise (or express more fitting if less printable sentiments) at various elements of this film, especially the use of digital video reshot on a TV monitor to "dirty" the footage—to create lines, crudity, a roughened appearance. The damaged texture is a metaphor for damaged illusions, a rebuke of the long-held belief by the Philippine movie industry that a film has to be clean and polished to be fit for public screening. Not only is this movie not clean or polished, 80 percent of the film was shot with available light.

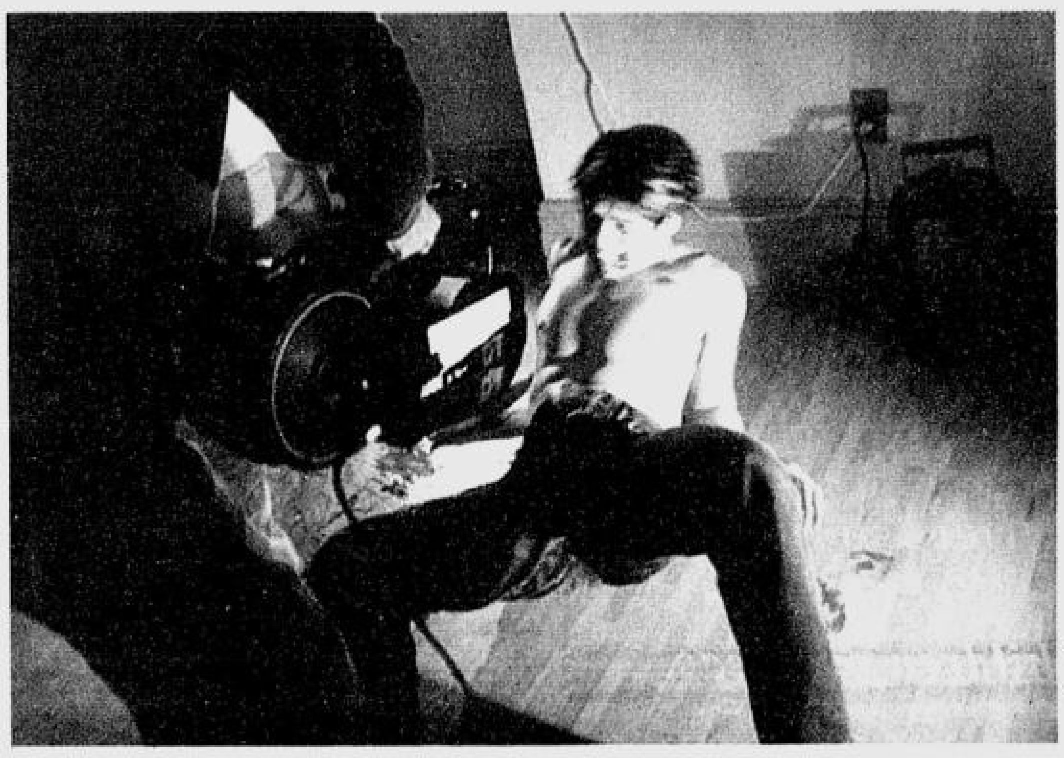
Radical

A film this long is radical to Filipino sensibilities, even down to the "damaged" texture and story structure, "radical" because this is something totally new to them. Only a radical sensibility can provoke the longed-for change in Philippine cinema. Only through such a sensibility can Philippine cinema acquire the proper vision, be made whole. Only thus can Philippine cinema, long pronounced "dead," be resurrected once more.

"Batang West Side" is hard to take at first glance, if our basis for watching is the culture and rhetoric of Philippine cinema.

IS/ p.E8

THE AUTHOR (right) gives instructions to actors (from left) Art Acuña, Yul Servo, Priscilla Almeda, Jomar Roldan and Gloria Diaz.



THE AUTHOR (with camera) mainly uses natural lighting to shoot a key scene with Yul Servo.

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MART

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Tel. No. (02) 812-4513 Telefax Number (02) 817-4008
Email Address: philtoa@i-next.net

Event Management Team:

Visions Imex, Inc.
Room 805, 8th Floor, Eisenhower St.
Jafor Place Bldg., Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Tel. Nos. (02) 727-2380 Telefax Number (02) 727-2385
Email Address: visions_imex@pacific.net.ph

Heno de Pravia

Over
P300,000
worth of prizes to be won

Winning Image Models get P100,000 cash each.

1. Open to male/female aspirants, 16 to 35, single or married. Previous winners are not qualified to join the search.
2. Attach 1 close-up (3R, most recent) color photo to any of these proofs of purchase:
   - One (1) empty Heno de Pravia (HDP) Soap Pack (135 g. or 180 g.)
   - Two (2) empty 90 g. HDP Soap Packs
   - One (1) empty HDP Skin Whitening Soap/Cream Pack
   - One (1) back label of HDP Deo Roll-on Active Plus
   - One (1) back label of Heno de Pravia Agua de Colonia

   On the empty pack, print your name, address, phone numbers and signature.
3. If you're sending a back label, stick it at the back of the photo. Write your name, address, phone numbers, and signature on a separate piece of paper.
   Mail entries to:

HENO DE PRAVIA
Search for Image Models 3
P.O. Box 19400 San Juan, MM

Lucky Searchers can win P30,000 worth of prizes.

1. Attach 1 close-up (3R, most recent) photo of your Image Model to any of the above-mentioned proofs of purchase.
2. At the back of the photo, print the name of your Image Model candidate. On the empty pack, print your name, address, phone nos. and signature. Mail entries to the address above.

Lucky Senders can win up to P60,000.

1. Lucky Senders are entries without photos attached, and are eligible only for the 3 bimonthly draws of P20,000 each. Write your name, address, phone nos., and signature on any of the above-mentioned HDP proofs of purchase. Mail entries to the same address.
2. Non-winning Image Model and Lucky Searcher entries are also qualified for the draws. So send as many entries as you can!

* *Entries must be received at least 5 days before the screening/draw dates. (1st) Jan. 16, 2002; (2nd) Mar. 18, 2002; (3rd) May 16, 2002*

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PROMO DETAILS:
The nationwide promo runs from Nov. 17, 2001 to May 17, 2002

Pre-screening for qualifiers:
All entries received will be screened by client, agency, and DTI rep. every 2 mos. The bimonthly Lucky Sender winner will be drawn from the Lucky Sender and non-winning Image Model/ Lucky Searcher entries.

Criteria for pre-screening:
Photogenic quality and image projection - 50%
Beauty (*For males: Appeal*) - 50%
Must possess a beautiful (or handsome) face with clear complexion.

Selection of Finalists:
Only 10 final candidates (5 males, 5 females) who meet the cut-off score of 85% will be chosen for the final judging.

Final Image Model candidates and their Lucky Searchers (if any) will be notified by registered mail. They must confirm their participation on or before May 24, 2002.

The Lucky Searchers will have to show their registered mail and present a valid ID on the screening date.

Final Screening:
The 10 official candidates will undergo VTR and photo sessions on May 31, 2002 at Horizon Edsa Hotel. Judges will determine the official HDP Image Models.

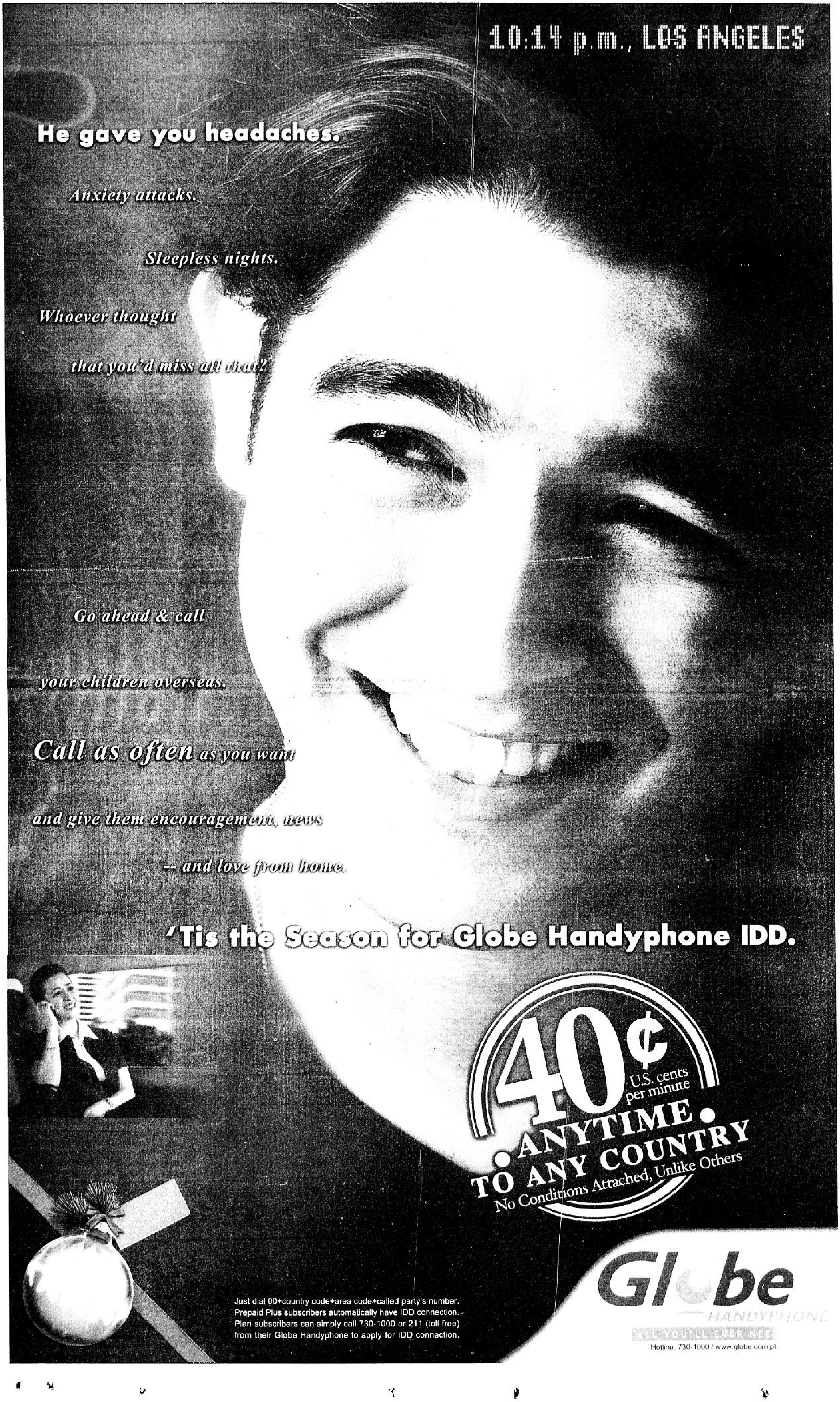
Criteria for final screening:
Personality - 50%
Beauty (Appeal for Males) - 40%
Talent - 10%

Announcement of Winners:
Awarding of Image Model/ Lucky Searcher winners will be on June 1, 2002 in one of Manila's prestigious malls.

Prizes:
Image Models: each receives P100,000 in cash *plus P10,000 worth of local & imported Gal products.*
Lucky Searchers (if any): each receives P20,000 in cash *plus P10,000 worth of local & imported Gal products.*
Lucky Senders: each receives P20,000 in cash.

For inquiries, call TACTICA Ads @ 671-9795 to 97

PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 1321, SERIES OF 2001



10:14 p.m., LOS ANGELES

He gave you headaches.

Anxiety attacks.

Sleepless nights.

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that you'd miss all that?

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your children overseas.

***Call as often** as you want*

and give them encouragement, news

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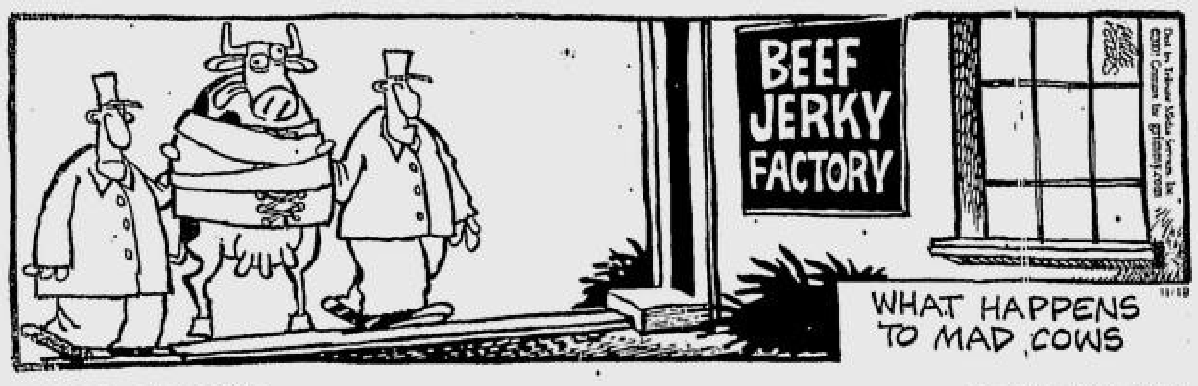
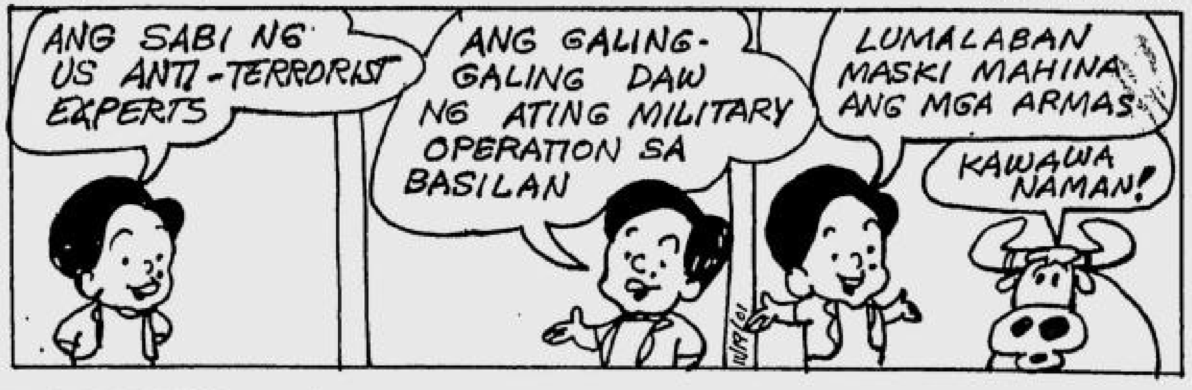
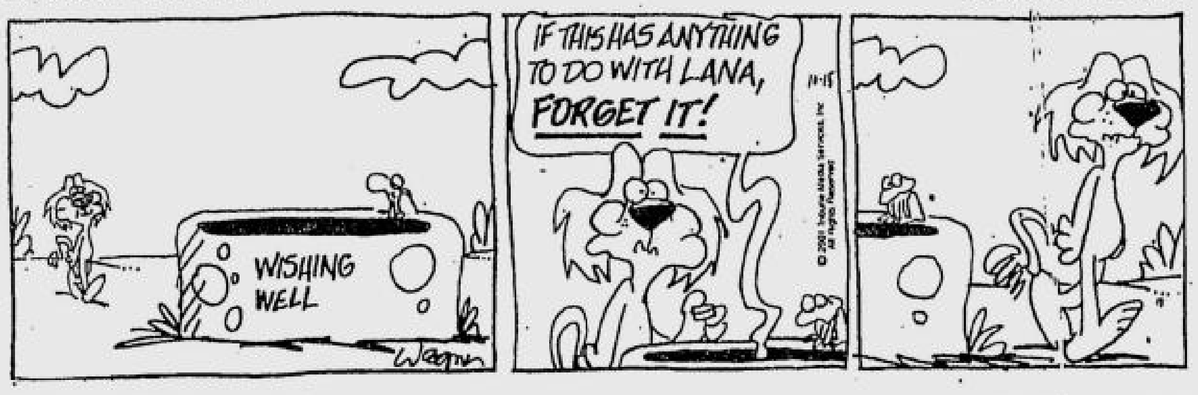
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


BEEF JERKY FACTORY
WHAT HAPPENS TO MAD COWS
11-19

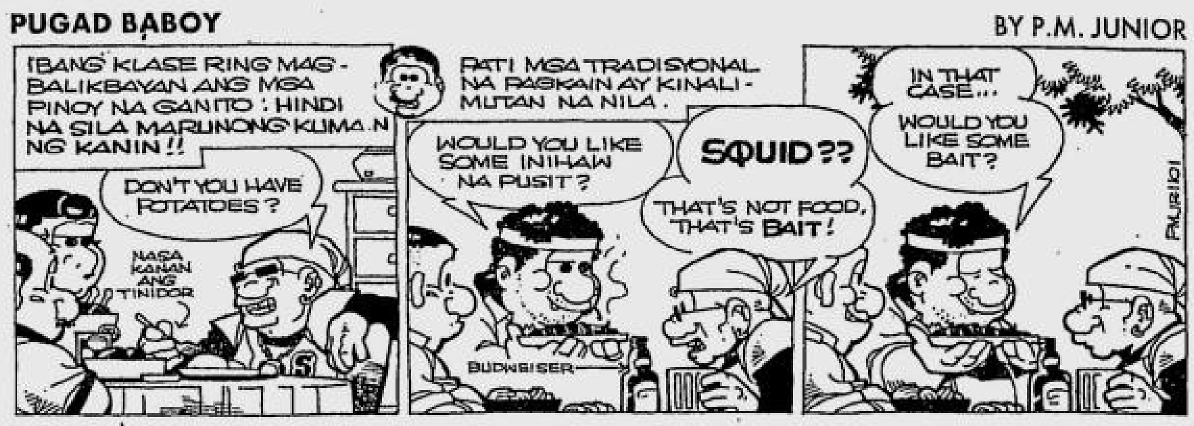
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ANG SABI NG US ANTI-TERRORIST EXPERTS
ANG GALING-GALING DAW NG ATING MILITARY OPERATION SA BASILAN
LUMALABAN MASKI MAHINA ANG MGA ARMAS
KAWAWA NAMAN!

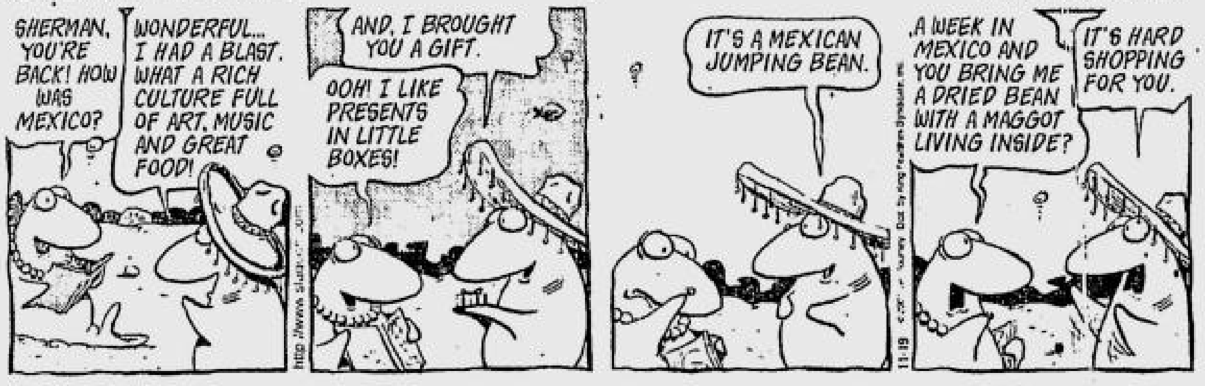
ANIMAL CRACKER BY FRIED WAGNER


WISHING WELL
IF THIS HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH LANA, FORGET IT!
WAGNER

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


IBANG KLASE RING MAG-BALIKBAYAN ANG MGA PINOY NA GANITO: HINDI NA SILA MARUNONG KUMAIN NG KANIN!!
DON'T YOU HAVE POTATOES?
NASA KANAN ANG TINIDOR
PATI MGA TRADISYONAL NA PAGKAIN AY KINALIMUTAN NA NILA.
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME INIHAW NA PUSIT?
SQUID??
THAT'S NOT FOOD, THAT'S BAIT!
BUDWEISER
IN THAT CASE...
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME BAIT?

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY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WONDERFUL... I HAD A BLAST. WHAT A RICH CULTURE FULL OF ART, MUSIC AND GREAT FOOD!
AND, I BROUGHT YOU A GIFT.
OOH! I LIKE PRESENTS IN LITTLE BOXES!
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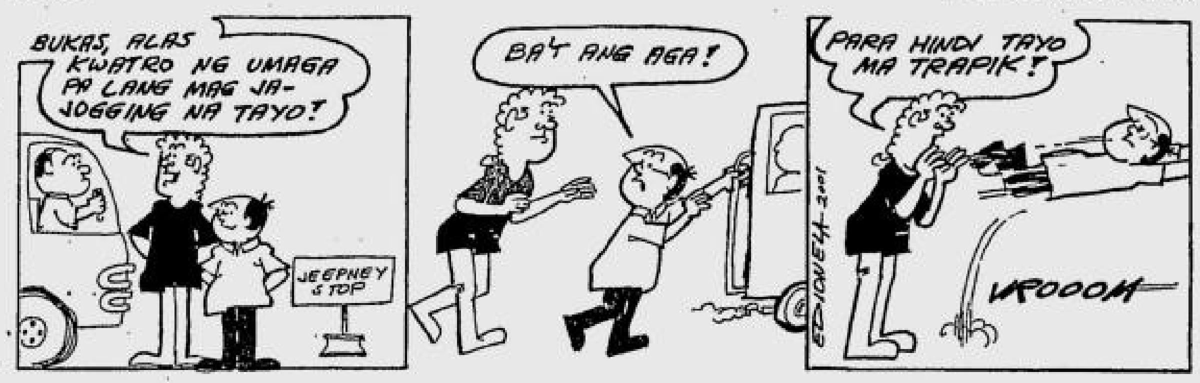
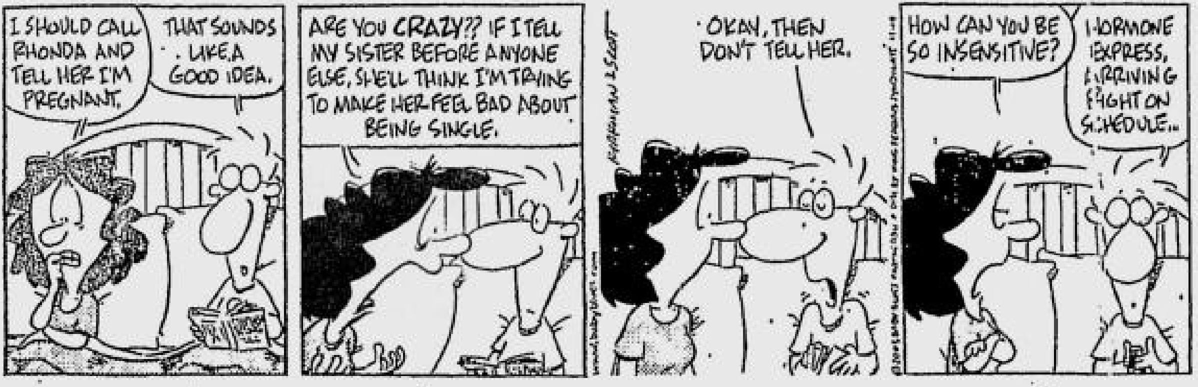
A WEEK IN MEXICO AND YOU BRING ME A DRIED BEAN WITH A MAGGOT LIVING INSIDE?
IT'S HARD SHOPPING FOR YOU.

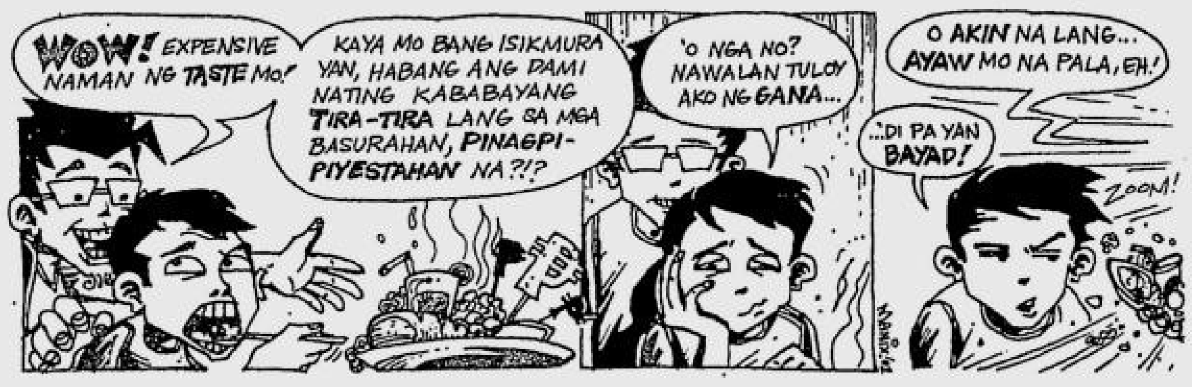
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


BUKAS, ALAS KWATRO NG UMAGA PA LANG MAG JA-JOGGING NA TAYO!
JEEPNEY STOP
BA'T ANG AGA!
PARA HINDI TAYO MA TRAPIK!
VROOOM
EDIONELA 2001

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


I SHOULD CALL RHONDA AND TELL HER I'M PREGNANT.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA.
ARE YOU CRAZY?? IF I TELL MY SISTER BEFORE ANYONE ELSE, SHE'LL THINK I'M TRYING TO MAKE HER FEEL BAD ABOUT BEING SINGLE.
OKAY, THEN DON'T TELL HER.
HOW CAN YOU BE SO INSENSITIVE?
HORMONE EXPRESS, ARRIVING RIGHT ON SCHEDULE..

GARAPATA BLOOD BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


WOW! EXPENSIVE NAMAN NG TASTE MO!
KAYA MO BANG ISIKMURA YAN, HABANG ANG DAMI NATING KABABAYANG TIRA-TIRA LANG SA MGA BASURAHAN, PINAGPI-PIYESTAHAN NA?!?
'O NGA NO? NAWALAN TULOY AKO NG GANA...
O AKIN NA LANG... AYAW MO NA PALA, EH!
...DI PA YAN BAYAD!
ZOOM!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ted Turner, Jodie Foster, Meg Ryan, Larry King, Savion Glover, Ahmad Rashad

Happy Birthday: Pick up the pace and prepare to make snap decisions. You can count on some obstacles and frustrations. Be relentless in your efforts and you will sail through any minor setbacks and reap rewards. Your numbers: 15, 17, 19, 22, 28, 37

ARIES (March 21-April 19): It's time to get serious about the future. You probably haven't been doing your best lately. Personal problems are interfering with productivity. Consider whether your motives are valid. You may need to change your direction.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Consider planning a family outing or spending time together at home. You can win points with children by taking an interest in their accomplishments.

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LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Take work home today. Sudden surprising changes concerning co-workers will leave you feeling insecure. Minor health problems due to stress may lower your vitality.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Meet new people who can offer mental stimulation and some fresh ideas that will lead to positive changes. A change is as good as a rest.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take good advice today. A broken heart is likely if you pursue an unavailable person. Don't take out your frustrations on loved ones. There are always two sides.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take it easy. This is not the day to take chances. Your do-or-die attitude may get you into trouble. Don't be too stubborn to know when it's time to let something or someone go.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You should consider starting your own business. Don't go overboard. Start small and build your business on solid ground. You will enjoy meeting people and gaining information today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Not everyone shares your enthusiasm. You may be a little too determined and forceful in dealing with others. Don't twist things around so that they sound more enticing. Stick to the truth if you want others to pitch in.

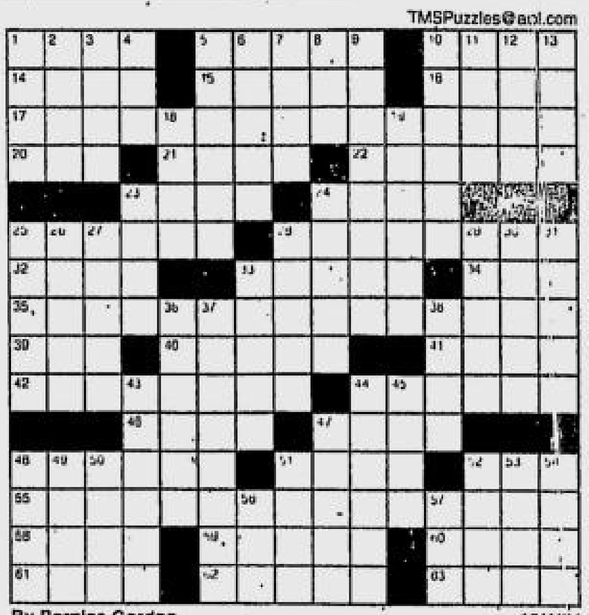
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It is best to play it straight today. A secret affair would only cause complications and mishaps in your life. Don't become involved in other people's private matters. You can make sound financial investments if you act fast.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may be uptight today. Take a trip or just spend some quality time with people you enjoy. Stop doing for everyone else and start doing for yourself.

Birthday Baby: You were born to strive for perfection. You are determined, forceful and will not give up until you reach your goals. You are dedicated and will never back down.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Bernice Gordon
Philadelphia, PA

10/4/01

ACROSS
1 Chip's chipmunk buddy
5 Indian prince
10 Charity
14 Etc.'s cousin
15 Wed without warning
16 Ground
17 Transitional abode of an actress?
20 Actress Irving
21 Plentiful
22 Assisted
23 Experienced sailor
24 Canaveral or Fear
25 Bigotry
28 Host of TV's "Frontier Justice"
32 Off-base GI
33 Heaps
34 Vein to mine
35 Rock of an actress?
39 Lion, Tiger or Bear
40 University of Maine town
41 Bahrain ruler
42 Physically pleasurable
44 Gives lip to
46 Soaks up rays
47 Liquid tastes
48 Bad-mouth
51 Zenith
52 Waikiki garland
55 Instrument of an actress?
58 Knightsbridge cleaning woman
59 Synthetic fiber
60 Slow flow
61 Male red deer
62 "Beau ___"
63 Son of Seth

DOWN
1 ___ vu
2 Elemental unit
3 Gentlewoman
4 Lilly or Wallach
5 Shoot the same scene again
6 Overhead
7 Actor Ferrer
8 Suitable
9 Brayed
10 Welsh designer Laura
11 Downtown Chicago
12 Imitate silently
13 Snowmobile
18 Periods
19 Go by again
23 Window ledge
24 Viola's kin
25 Speaks roughly
26 Mindful
27 Intestine segment
28 Mortgage attachments
29 Lodgings
30 "Cheers" bartender
31 Prognosticators
33 Overly devout
36 Southern address
37 Looking out on
38 Hardy lass
43 Dollar bill artist
44 Actress Signoret
45 Mirrored
47 Hurry!
48 Part of a foot
49 Port on Okinawa
50 Arcturus or Rigel
51 Hole-making tools
52 MGM mascot
53 Automaker Ferrari
54 March 15th, e.g.
56 CBS logo
57 Misfortune

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

B	I	O	S	■	S	E	T	S	■	F	L	A	P	S
A	C	L	U	■	O	R	E	O	■	L	A	L	A	W
N	E	I	N	■	P	R	E	S	■	A	M	E	B	A
G	R	O	U	C	H	O	M	A	R	X	■	X	L	I
■	■	■	N	A	I	L	■	■	H	E	S	T	O	N
A	L	B	U	M	S	■	O	P	E	N	E	R	■	■
H	A	I	■	U	T	O	P	I	A	■	T	E	N	S
A	T	L	A	S	■	M	E	T	■	L	A	B	E	L
B	E	L	L	■	S	E	R	A	P	E	■	E	V	E
■	■	C	A	B	A	N	A	■	L	E	A	K	E	D
R	O	U	S	E	D	■	■	P	E	R	M	■	■	■
E	N	L	■	G	E	N	E	R	A	Y	B	U	R	N
M	E	L	E	E	■	E	R	O	S	■	I	L	I	E
A	G	E	N	T	■	F	I	V	E	■	T	A	T	A
P	A	N	G	S	■	F	E	E	D	■	S	N	A	P

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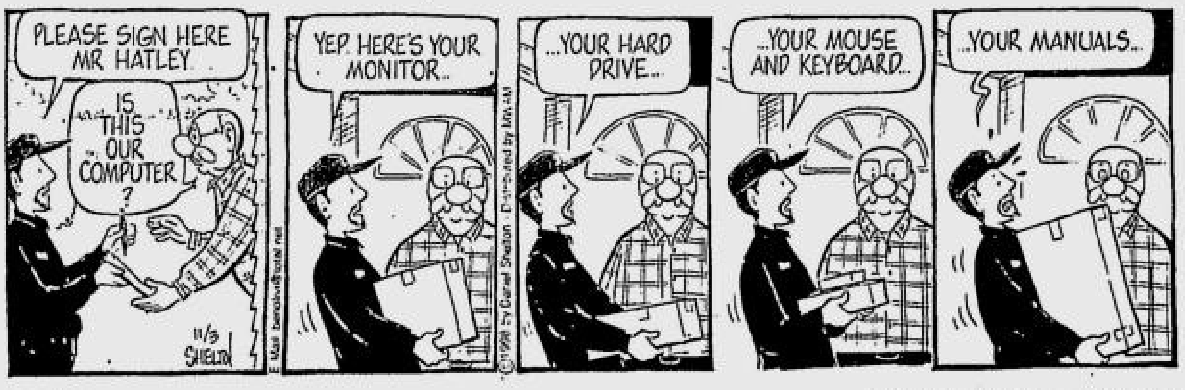
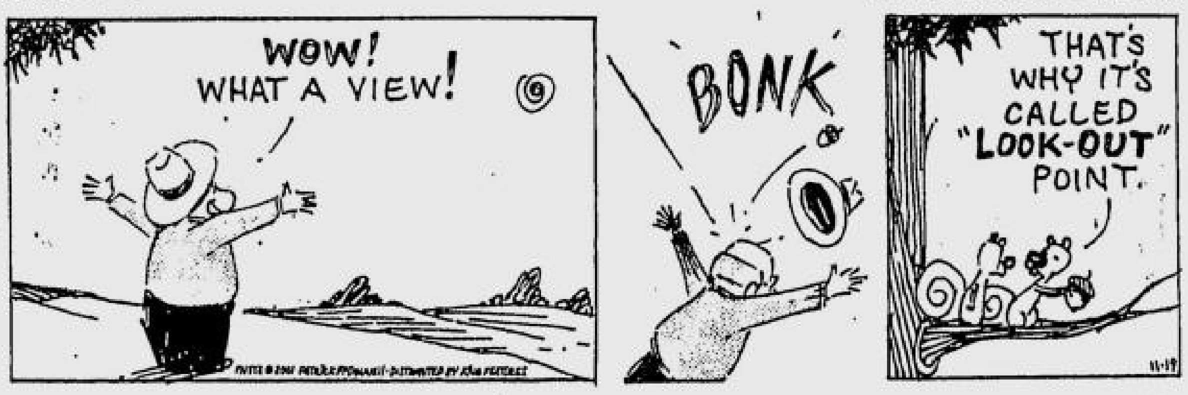
10/4/01

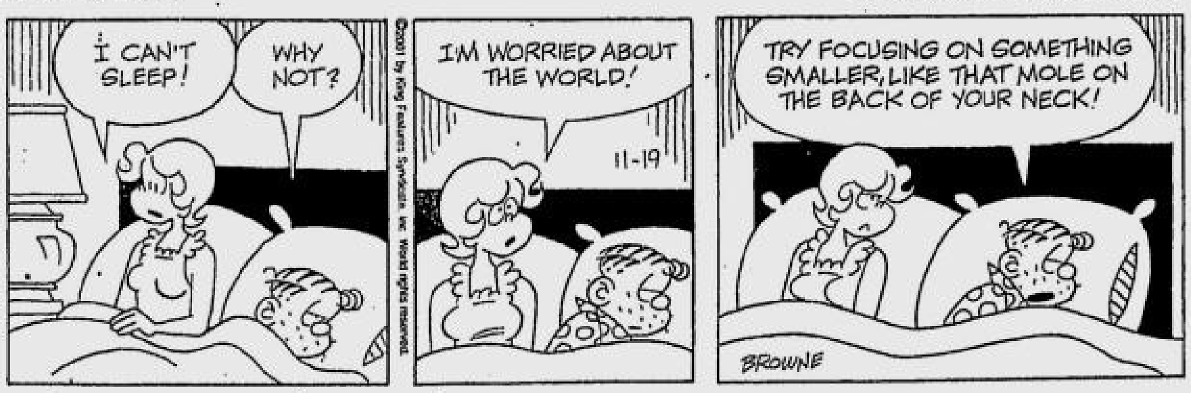
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


PLEASE SIGN HERE MR HATLEY
IS THIS OUR COMPUTER?
YEP. HERE'S YOUR MONITOR..
...YOUR HARD DRIVE..
...YOUR MOUSE AND KEYBOARD..
..YOUR MANUALS..
11/3 SHELTON

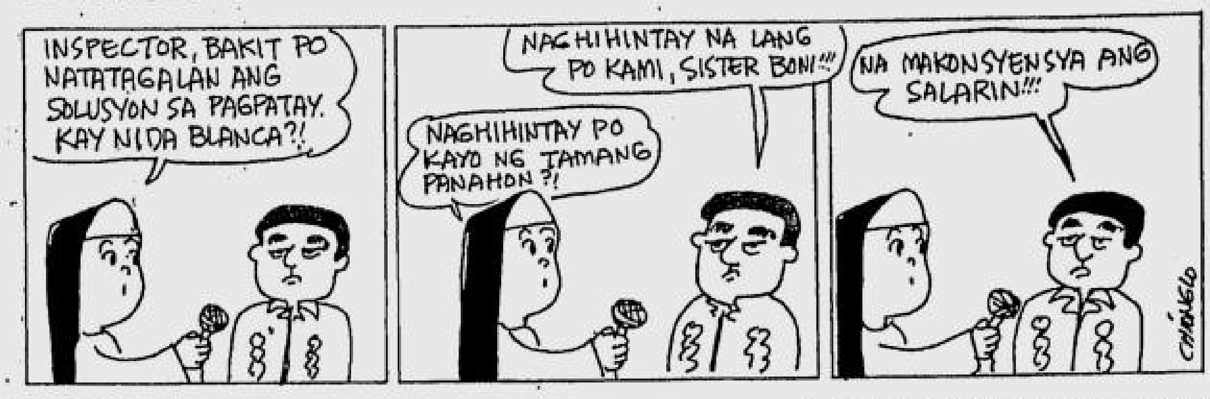
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WOW! WHAT A VIEW!
BONK
THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED "LOOK-OUT" POINT.
11-19

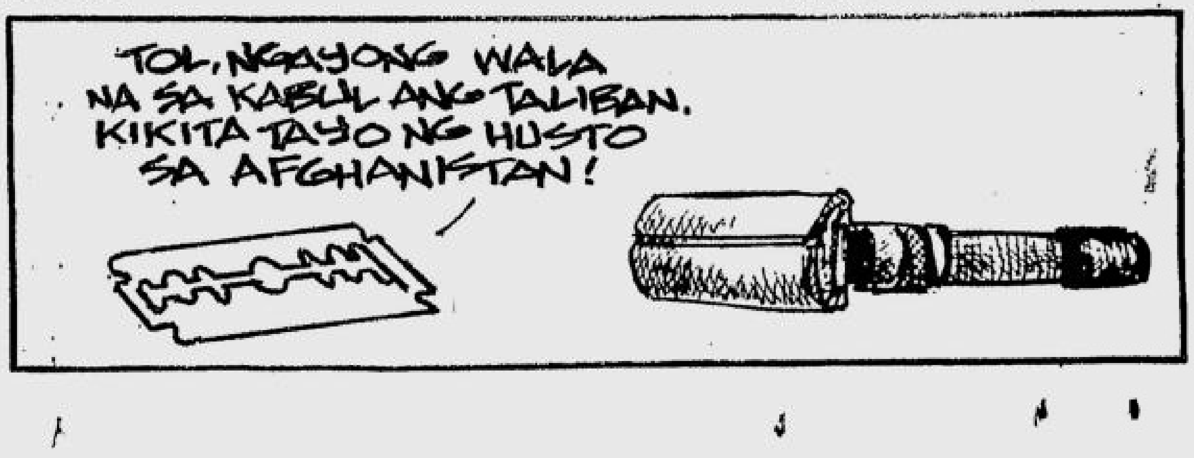
HI AND LOIS BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


I CAN'T SLEEP!
WHY NOT?
I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE WORLD!
11-19
TRY FOCUSING ON SOMETHING SMALLER, LIKE THAT MOLE ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK!
BROWNE

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


INSPECTOR, BAKIT PO NATATAGALAN ANG SOLUSYON SA PAGPATAY KAY NIDA BLANCA?!
NAGHIHINTAY PO KAYO NG TAMANG PANAHON?!
NAGHIHINTAY NA LANG PO KAMI, SISTER BONI!!!
NA MAKONSYENSYA ANG SALARIN!!!
CHIONGLO

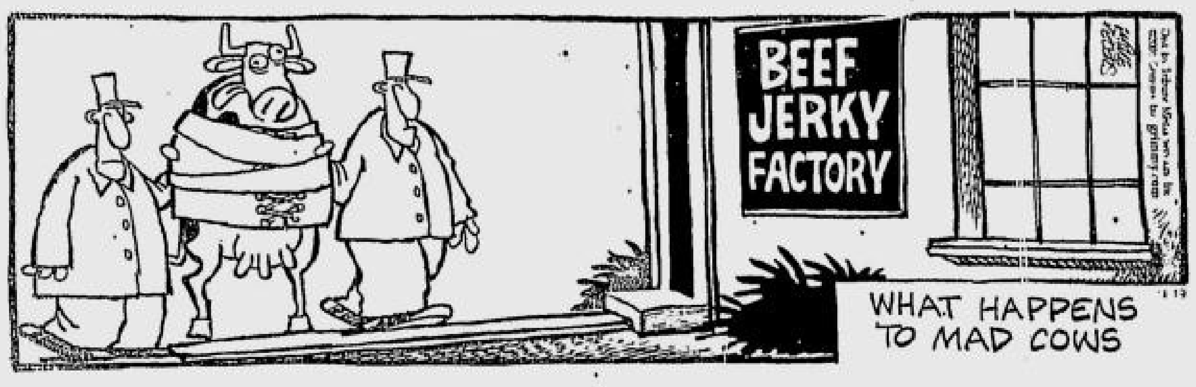
TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


TOL, NGAYONG WALA NA SA KABUL ANG TALIBAN. KIKITA TAYO NG HUSTO SA AFGHANISTAN!

ComicRelief

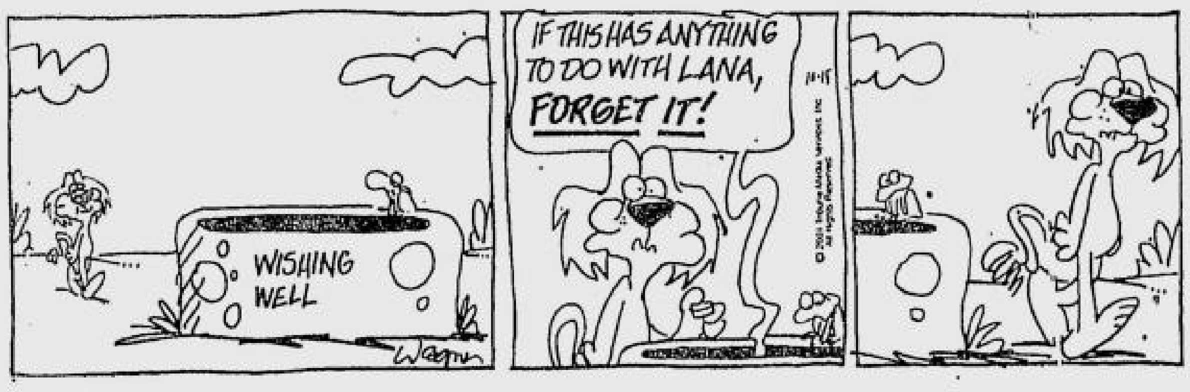
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


BEEF JERKY FACTORY
WHAT HAPPENS TO MAD COWS

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRIED WAGNER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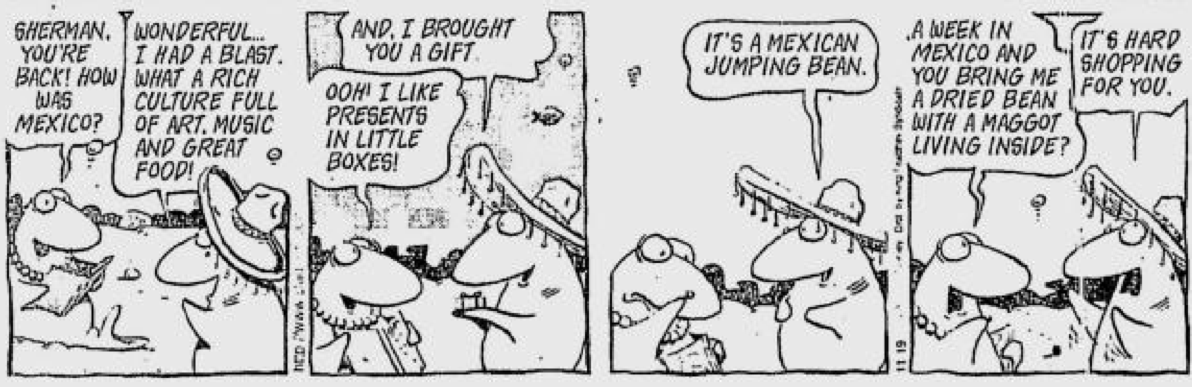
IF THIS HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH LANA, FORGET IT!
WAGNER

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY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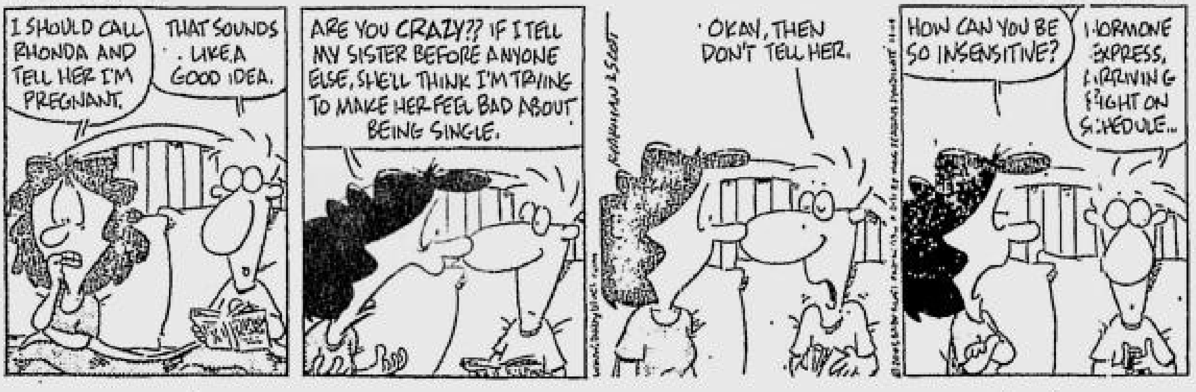
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT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LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take good advice today. A broken heart is likely if you pursue an unavailable person. Don't take out your frustrations on loved ones. There are always two sides.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take it easy. This is not the day to take chances. Your do-or-die attitude may get you into trouble. Don't be [illegible] stubborn to know when it's time to let something or someone go.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You should consider starting your own business. Don't go overboard. Start small and build your business on solid ground. You will enjoy meeting people and gaining information today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Not everyone shares your enthusiasm. You may be a little too determined and forceful in dealing with others. Don't twist things around so that they sound more enticing. Stick to the truth if you want others to pitch in.

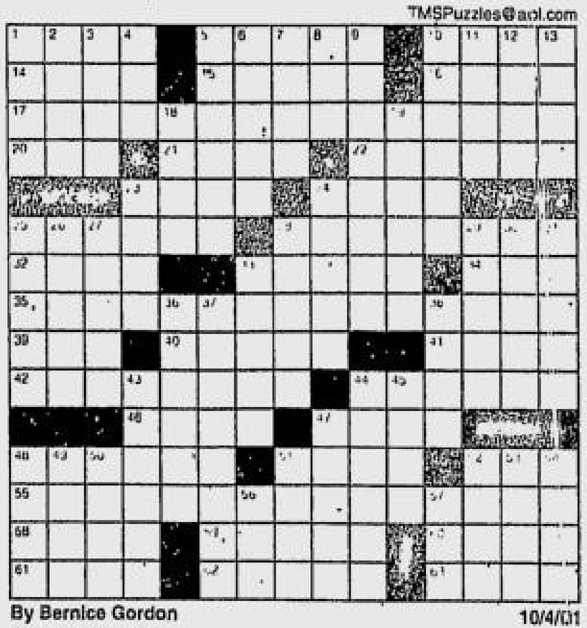
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It is best to play it straight today. A secret affair would only cause complications and mishaps in your life. Don't become involved in other people's private matters. You can make sound financial investments if you act fast.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may be uptight today. Take a trip or just spend some quality time with people you enjoy. Stop doing for everyone else and start doing for yourself.

Birthday Baby: You were born to strive for perfection. You are determined, forceful and will not give up until you reach your goals. You are dedicated and will never back down.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Bernice Gordon
Philadelphia, PA

10/4/01

ACROSS
1 Chip's chipmunk buddy
5 Indian prince
10 Charity
14 Etc.'s cousin
15 Wed without warning
16 Ground
17 Transitional abode of an actress?
20 Actress Irving
21 Plentiful
22 Assisted
23 Experienced sailor
24 Canaveral or Fear
25 Bigotry
28 Host of TV's "Frontier Justice"
32 Off-base GI
33 Heaps
34 Vein to mine
35 Rock of an actress?
39 Lion, Tiger or Bear
40 University of Maine town
41 Bahrain ruler
42 Physically pleasurable
44 Gives lip to
46 Soaks up rays
47 Liquid tastes
48 Bad-mouth
51 Zenith
52 Waikiki garland
55 Instrument of an actress?
58 Knightsbridge cleaning woman
59 Synthetic fiber
60 Slow flow
61 Male red deer
62 "Beau __"
63 Son of Seth

DOWN
1 __ vu
2 Elemental unit
3 Gentlewoman
4 Lilly or Wallach
5 Shoot the same scene again
6 Overhead
7 Actor Ferrer
8 Suitable
9 Brayed
10 Welsh designer Laura
11 Downtown Chicago
12 Imitate silently
13 Snowmobile
18 Periods
19 Go by again
23 Window ledge
24 Viola's kin
25 Speaks roughly
26 Mindful
27 Intestine segment
28 Mortgage attachments
29 Lodgings
30 "Cheers" bartender
31 Prognosticators
33 Overly devout
36 Southern address
37 Looking out on
38 Hardy lass
43 Dollar bill artist
44 Actress Signoret
45 Mirrored
47 Hurry!
48 Part of a foot
49 Port on Okinawa
50 Arcturus or Rigel
51 Hole-making tools
52 MGM mascot
53 Automaker Ferrari
54 March 15th, e.g.
56 CBS logo
57 Misfortune

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

B	I	O	S	■	S	E	T	S	■	F	L	A	P	S
A	C	L	U	■	O	R	E	O	■	L	A	L	A	W
N	E	I	N	■	P	R	E	S	■	A	M	E	B	A
G	R	O	U	C	H	O	M	A	R	X	■	X	L	I
■	■	■	N	A	I	L	■	■	H	E	S	T	O	N
A	L	B	U	M	S	■	O	P	E	N	E	R	■	■
H	A	I	■	U	T	O	P	I	A	■	T	E	N	S
A	T	L	A	S	■	M	E	T	■	L	A	B	E	L
B	E	L	L	■	S	E	R	A	P	E	■	E	V	E
■	■	C	A	B	A	N	A	■	L	E	A	K	E	D
R	O	U	S	E	D	■	■	P	E	R	M	■	■	■
E	N	L	■	G	E	N	E	R	A	Y	B	U	R	N
M	E	L	E	E	■	E	R	O	S	■	I	L	I	E
A	G	E	N	T	■	F	I	V	E	■	T	A	T	A
P	A	N	G	S	■	F	E	E	D	■	S	N	A	P

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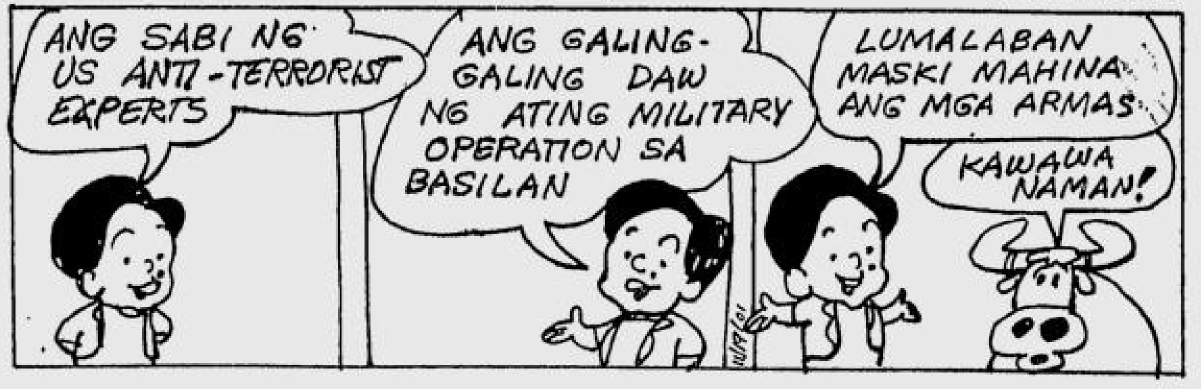
10/4/01

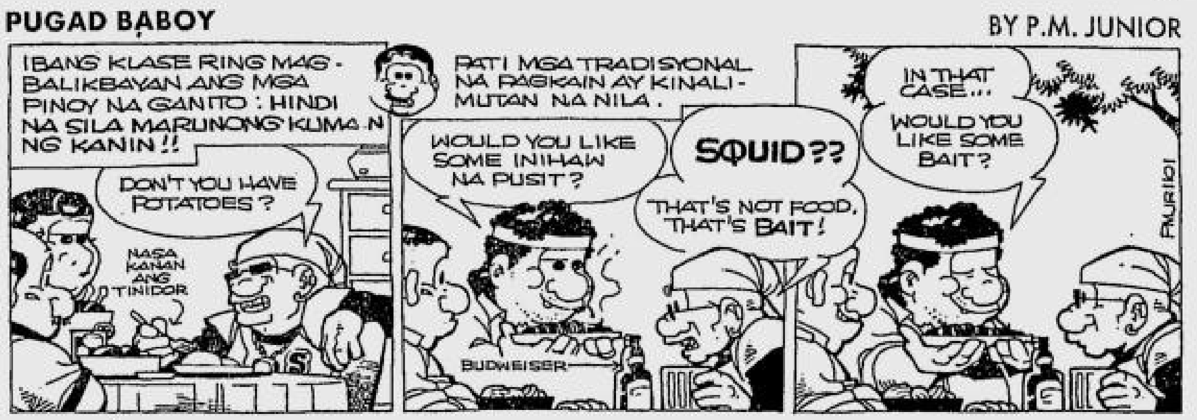
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG SABI NG US ANTI-TERRORIST EXPERTS
ANG GALING-GALING DAW NG ATING MILITARY OPERATION SA BASILAN
LUMALABAN MASKI MAHINA ANG MGA ARMAS
KAWAWA NAMAN!

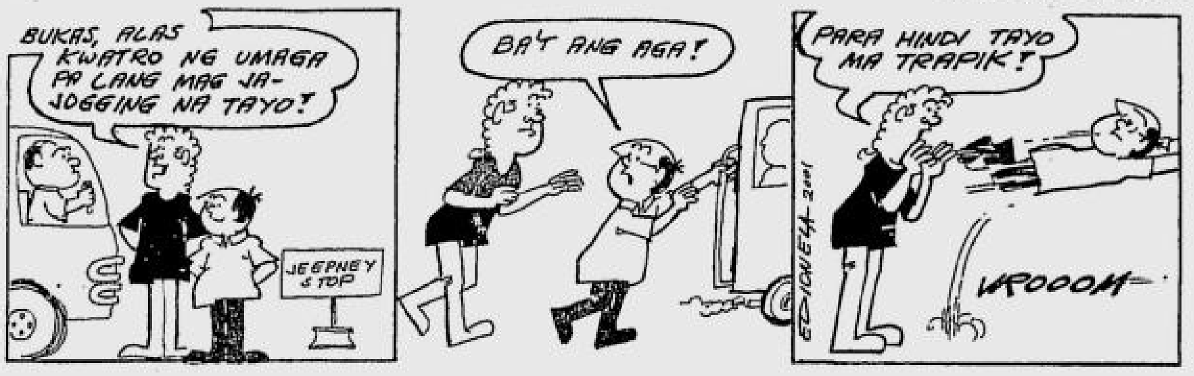
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


IBANG KLASE RING MAG-BALIKBAYAN ANG MGA PINOY NA GANITO: HINDI NA SILA MARUNONG KUMAIN NG KANIN!!
DON'T YOU HAVE POTATOES?
NASA KANAN ANG TINIDOR
PATI MGA TRADISYONAL NA PAGKAIN AY KINALIMUTAN NA NILA.
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME INIHAW NA PUSIT?
SQUID??
THAT'S NOT FOOD, THAT'S BAIT!
BUDWEISER
IN THAT CASE...
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME BAIT?

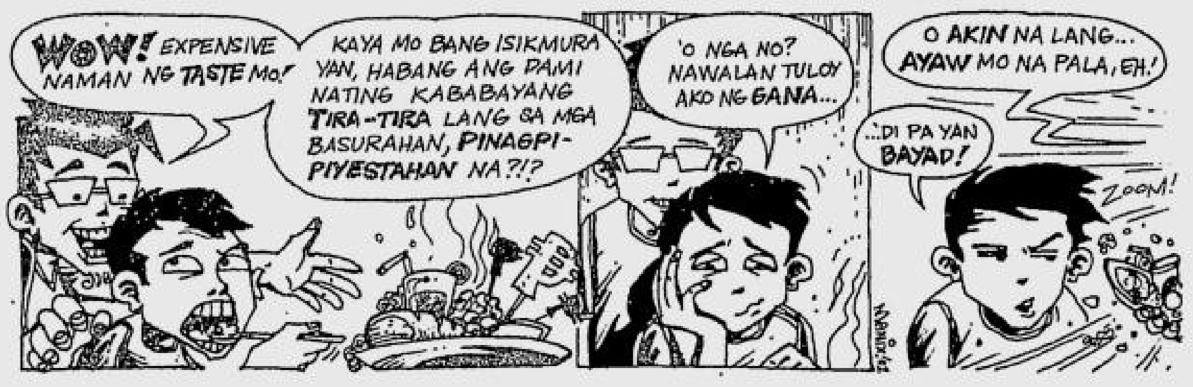
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


BUKAS, ALAS KWATRO NG UMAGA PA LANG MAG JA-JOGGING NA TAYO!
JEEPNEY STOP
BA'T ANG AGA!
PARA HINDI TAYO MA TRAPIK!
VROOOM
E DIONELA 2001

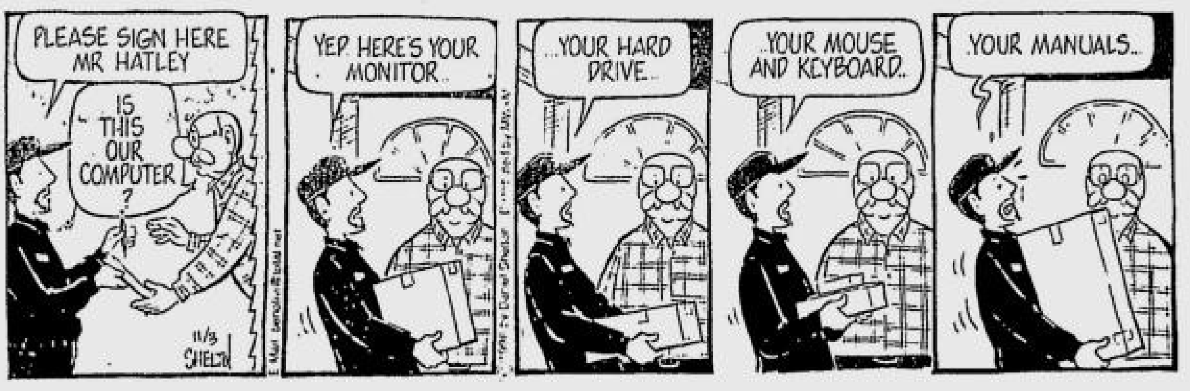
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


WOW! EXPENSIVE NAMAN NG TASTE MO!
KAYA MO BANG ISIKMURA YAN, HABANG ANG DAMI NATING KABABAYANG TIRA-TIRA LANG SA MGA BASURAHAN, PINAGPI-PIYESTAHAN NA?!?
'O NGA NO? NAWALAN TULOY AKO NG GANA...
O AKIN NA LANG... AYAW MO NA PALA, EH!
...DI PA YAN BAYAD!
ZOOM!

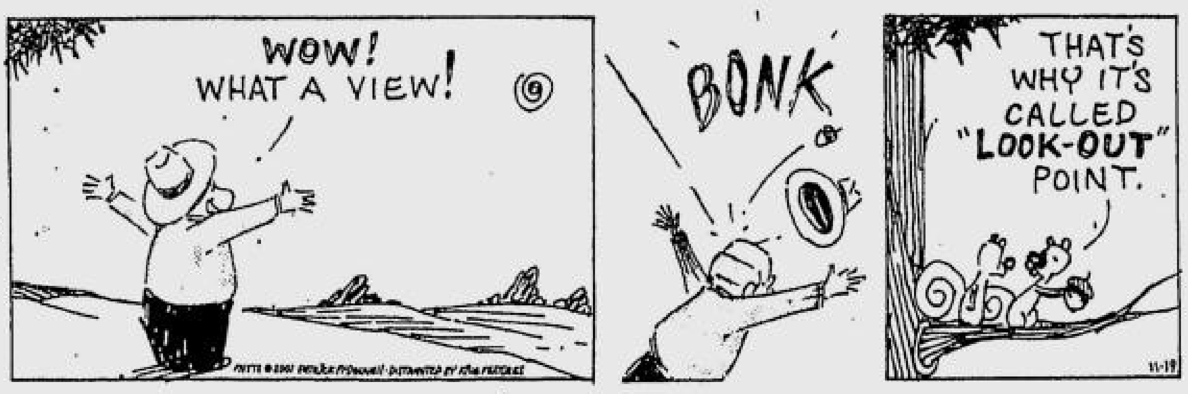
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


PLEASE SIGN HERE MR HATLEY
IS THIS OUR COMPUTER?
YEP. HERE'S YOUR MONITOR..
...YOUR HARD DRIVE..
..YOUR MOUSE AND KEYBOARD..
..YOUR MANUALS..
11/3 SHELTON

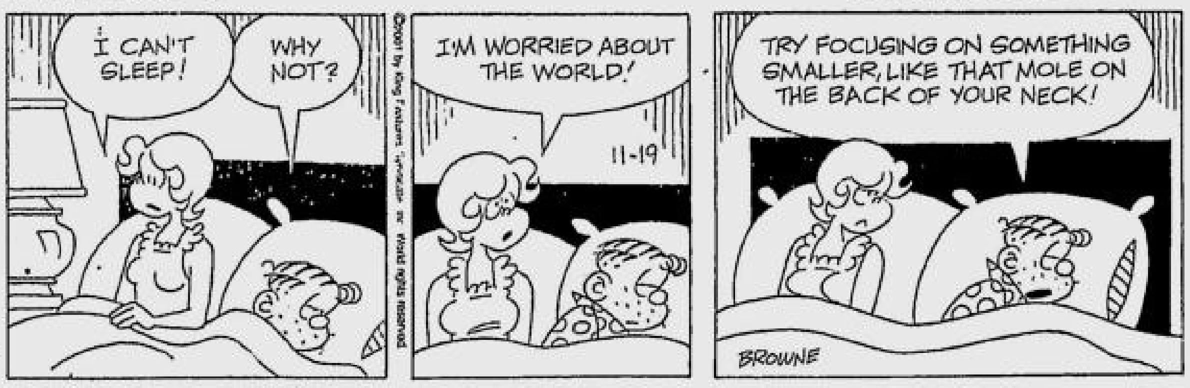
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WOW! WHAT A VIEW!
BONK
THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED "LOOK-OUT" POINT.
11-19

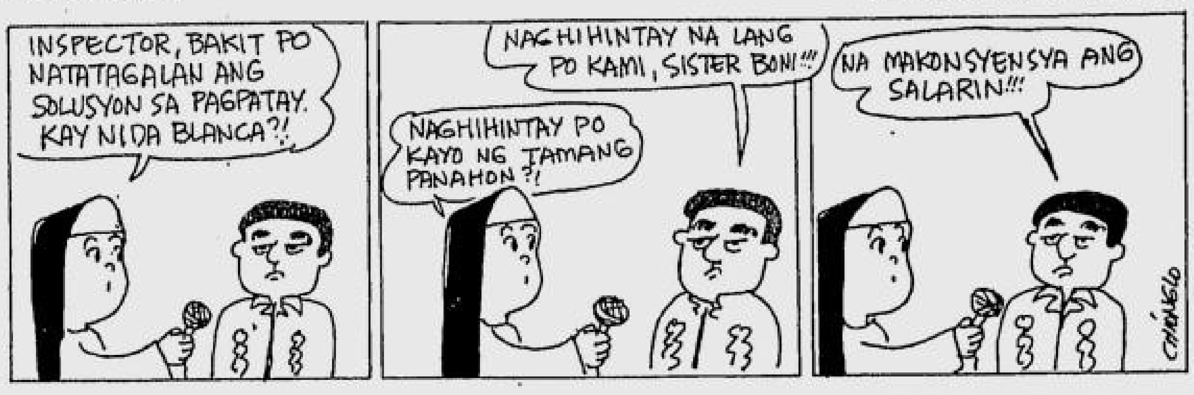
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


I CAN'T SLEEP!
WHY NOT?
I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE WORLD!
11-19
TRY FOCUSING ON SOMETHING SMALLER, LIKE THAT MOLE ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK!
BROWNE

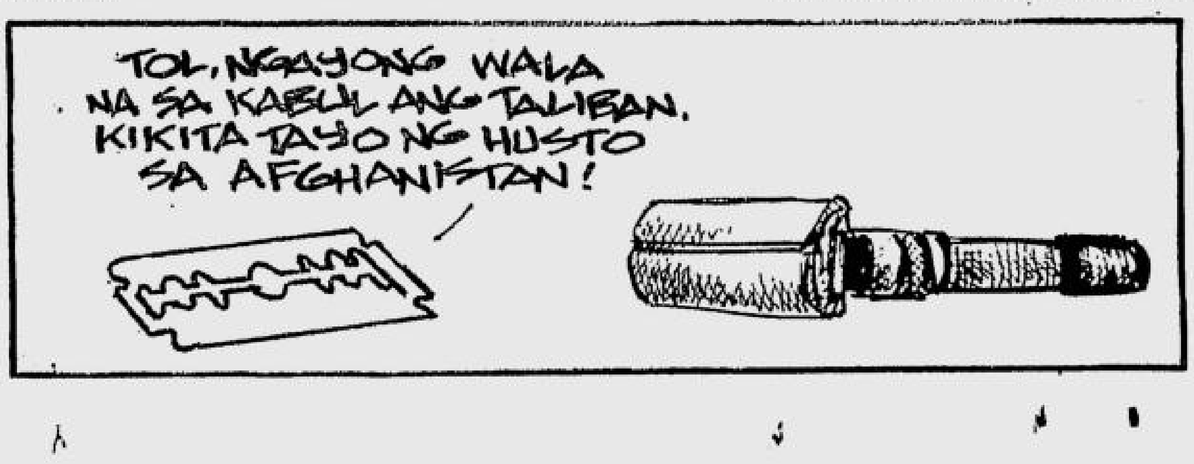
LOVEKNOTS

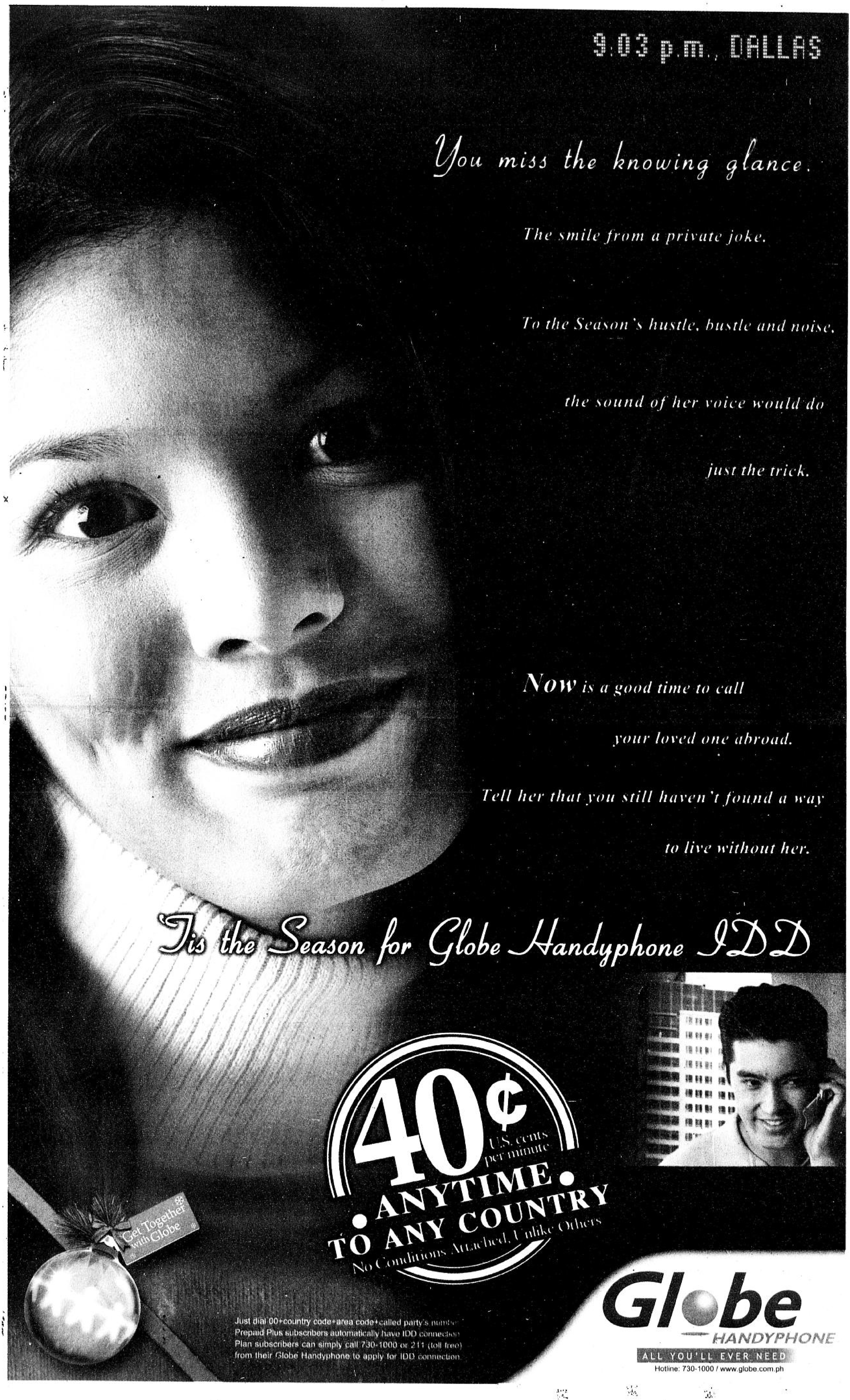
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


INSPECTOR, BAKIT PO NATATAGALAN ANG SOLUSYON SA PAGPATAY KAY NIDA BLANCA?!
NAGHIHINTAY PO KAYO NG TAMANG PANAHON?!
NAGHIHINTAY NA LANG PO KAMI, SISTER BONI!!!
NA MAKONSYENSYA ANG SALARIN!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


TOL, NGAYONG WALA NA SA KABUL ANG TALIBAN, KIKITA TAYO NG HUSTO SA AFGHANISTAN!



9:03 p.m., DALLAS

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Keeping that hair up there

An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. This is probably the principle behind most personal care products manufactured nowadays. After all, what's a box of toothpaste except mainly to seize the onset of tooth decay? Or deodorants to spare others and ourselves of embarrassing body odor? More, we ward off coughs and colds with vitamins. We sprinkle on foot powder to keep our feet from smelling at the end of the day. And we apply suntan lotion before sunbathing to prevent sunburn.

Tons of health preventive measures fill our supermarkets everyday, serving almost every part of our body, even our hair. Sadly, hardly does anyone give any thought on taking extra care of his hair — not until it starts to fall off and all is lost.

Foltène lets you take action on your hair before it's too late. A revolutionary hair care treatment proven to prolong hair's life cycle, it nourishes the few layers of the scalp to give way to revitalized hair. Its safe, natural active ingredient, Trichosaccharide, deeply conditions the scalp by stimulating the circulation of blood and nutrients into the hair follicles without being absorbed into the bloodstream.

To use , first shampoo hair and towel dry. Then apply Foltène directly to the scalp. Do not rinse off nor shampoo again for six hours to ensure the essential contact time. Use only one vial at a time. For those with excessive falling or thinning of hair, undergo the attack and maintenance phase where you apply one vial every other day for 40 days (20 vials). For the maintenance phase, use two vials per week for two to three months. For those suffering from dandruff, dry hair, split ends and oily or dry scalp, use two vials per week for three months to ensure a healthier scalp. Resume the attack or maintenance cycle as needed to maintain hair and scalp condition.

With Foltène, today's active men and women need not suffer the fate of those who started losing hair in their mid 20's. Foltène's effectiveness is proven over a dozen countries worldwide. Although there is no known cure for baldness, Foltène normalizes the oily and dry areas, to encourage the growth of fuller, thicker, and healthier hair, preventing the irreversible stage of baldness.

So before others begin noticing the moon's reflection on your head, make Foltène a daily habit. It's never too late to start as long as the hair is still present. Because, with Foltène, there is no other way for hair to go but up.

For more inquiries, please write to:
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South Luzon Expressway, Sucat, Parañaque City

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WINTER IN MANHATTAN. Note the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center pre-Sept. 11. Crew and cast pose for snowy posterity. From left, boomman Bart Constantine, sound recordist Rudy Gonzales, Wardrom Lino-Ramilo, actor Ruben Tizon, art director Jason Baquilod, assistant director Istie Ortiz-Luis, production manager Allan Santos, director Lav Diaz, cinematographer Miguel Fabie III, art director Perry Mamaril, assistant cameraman Tony Ponti; (seated) production designer Cesar Hernando, actor Yul Servo and assistant cameraman Ruben Lee

PHOTOS BY MITOS CERVANTES

Is the Philippines ready for a five-hour Pinoy movie?

(From page E4)

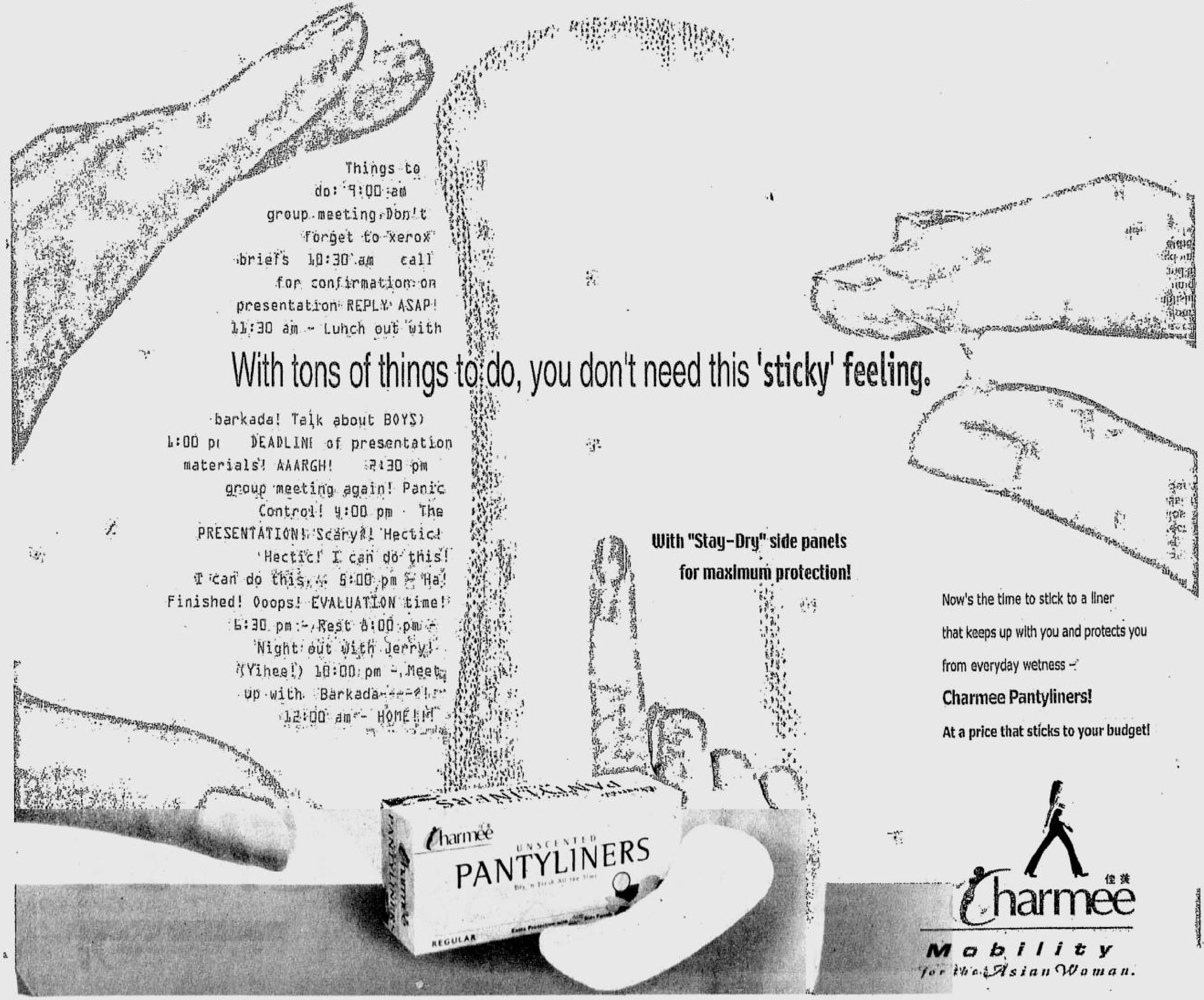
The habit or convention of watching films constitutes a culture of its own, meaning there is an experience, a whole tradition, a perspective of an entire community or society, a sensibility created that has become characteristic of individuals in that society.

Ever since the introduction of film as the newest, most popular medium of expression, Hollywood has been a tremendous influence on Philippine cinema. Cinema was one of the imperialist tools the Americans brought with them when they bought the Philippines from the Spaniards (or, conversely, when the Spaniards sold the Philippines to them) back in 1898; it quickly became an element of everyday Filipino life. Due to the length of their stay here (they finally left, along with their military bases in 1992), it may safely be assumed that the Filipino sensibility has been thoroughly colonized by America.

And because of this, the Filipino lost the chance to rise by his own bootstraps; colonization wrecked the Filipino's dream of establishing a nation molded according to his own unique vision. From the perspectives of politics and history, the Filipinos lost the struggle for freedom—freedom of nationhood, freedom of livelihood and sensibility, freedom of the arts, freedom both psychological and spiritual, freedom of any and every kind—when he was colonized, bought and sold. Add to this the experience of hegemony and war (Japan), dictatorship and terrorism (Marcos)—after all is said and done, the Filipinos have developed a "loser's culture," the end result of surviving their long and sadly complex history.

It's clear that what is needed is a profound cultural movement to restore this injury.

Cinema can do a great deal toward accomplishing this.



Things to do: 9:00 am group meeting Don't forget to xerox briefs 10:30 am call for confirmation on presentation REPLY ASAP! 11:30 am - Lunch out with barkada! Talk about BOYS) 1:00 pm DEADLINE of presentation materials! AAARGH! 2:30 pm group meeting again! Panic Control! 4:00 pm · The PRESENTATION! Scary!! Hectic! Hectic! I can do this! I can do this, - 5:00 pm - Ha! Finished! Ooops! EVALUATION time! 6:30 pm - Rest 8:00 pm - Night out with Jerry! (Yihee!) 10:00 pm - Meet up with Barkada---!! 12:00 am - HOME!!!

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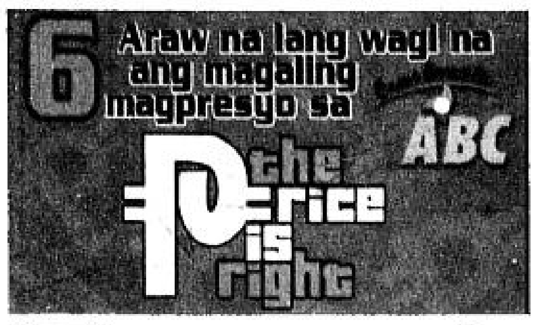
6 Araw na lang wagi na ang magaling magpresyo sa
ABC
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The magic man behind the 'Harry Potter' movie

David Heyman was the man who brought J.K. Rowling's book to the screen. Now the INQUIRER goes one-on-one with the producer of the year's biggest movie

BY RUEL S. DE VERA

HE would seem to be the most unlikely man to orchestrate the proceedings behind turning J.K. Rowling's international bestseller, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," into a multimillion dollar movie. But David Heyman, who had produced critically lauded independent films such as "The Daytrippers" and "Juice," had the providence of initiative. "Harry Potter" had just been released in 1997 when he optioned it, developing a friendship with Rowling herself. Now, Heyman has optioned all seven of the "Harry Potter" books, becoming a man in charge of a possible franchise for his fledgling Heyday Films.

But Heyman, who had worked for Warner Bros. and United Artists in Hollywood, truly loved the books, and promised Rowling the films would not be Americanized and instead would retain their distinctive British feel.

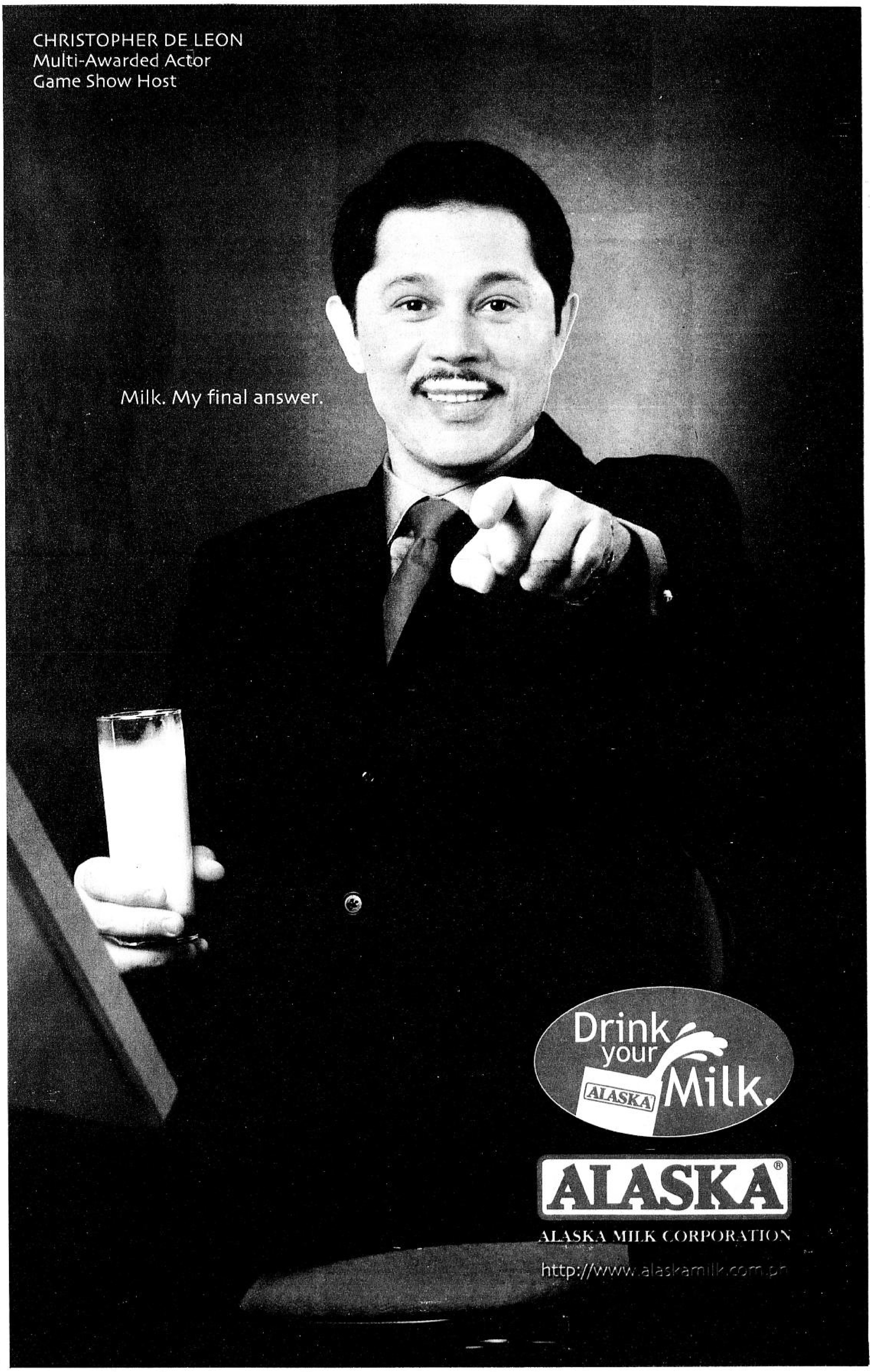
"I promised her I would retain her vision," Heyman says. With Rowling's agreement, Heyman began a dizzying and winding production that involved choosing the perfect director, putting together the right creative unit and, of course, finding the right cast. In the four years that followed, Heyman would gather a truly impressive group of award-winning talents.

He also took the time to find the right actor to play Harry. "We wanted someone who had a sense of wonder but also had lived a life, like an old soul in a child's body. He had to be ordinary but be capable of great things. A hero who was flawed."

It was Heyman himself, after fruitless auditions, who saw Daniel Radcliffe's face on a video of a TV movie and said, "This is who I want. This is Harry Potter!" When Daniel's parents initially demurred, Heyman continued to assuage their concerns, and eventually got his Harry. After that, Heyman found Rupert Grint and Emma Watson in auditions. "It was immediately apparent who were the three."

Now, Heyman stands at the crucial, perhaps magical moment of his career, and of the life of Heyday Films, for which "Harry Potter" is its first production. He

THE MAGIC/ p.F2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The magic man behind the 'Harry Potter' movie

(From page F1)

has lovingly shepherded Rowling's first book and now "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" stands perhaps at the door of cinema box-office history.

Meanwhile, the script for "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" is finished and Heyman has begun preproduction for the second movie. Heyman sat down for an exclusive one-on-one interview with the INQUIRER about how the movie emerged from the book.

DAVID Heyman (right) with director Chris Columbus

Has it surprised you how much the project has bloomed since you began it in 1997?

That's an understatement. When I began this project, it started because I really loved the book. I had no way of knowing it was going to become this big, that I would be working on a movie of this scale, and this whole thing would be so phenomenal. No idea at all.

How would you characterize the adaptation process?

It's been a most amazing process. I came back to London in 1996 to start my own production company, Heyday Films. I had two employees, my head of development, Tanya Seghatchian, and my secretary, Nisha. I had a young brother and sister, who were 10 and 14 respectively, and I was interested in doing a children's film that I would also enjoy.

Tanya had read about this new children's book in the paper. We get hundreds of submissions every week and for some reason Tanya didn't take those home with her. The agent sent a copy of "Harry Potter," and it was Nisha who took it home and read it. She came in on Monday and said she loved it. I read it that night and loved it, too.

The negotiations took six months and that had a lot of pressure because I wanted it so bad. Once we got it, it was a matter of finding the right writer, and we chose Steve Kloves, who had adapted "Wonderboys" and had written "Flesh and Bone." Then I took Jo Rowling to meet Steve—and that was the most nerve-wracking meeting because this was the person who was going to adapt her book. Then it was a matter of finding a director.

DANIEL Radcliffe plays Harry Potter

Steven Spielberg was the first choice?

He was very interested in doing it and we showed it to him. But he was working on three projects at that time, "A.I.," "Memoirs of a Geisha" and "Minority Report." So he said he would do whatever came first, which was "A.I." So he moved on, very gracefully. We then met all the other directors who had expressed interest. It was a hard decision, absolutely. But Chris Columbus emerged as the clear choice. He had the clearest vision, the most passion, the greatest desire to be faithful to the books and he was great with children. Beyond that, he loved British culture.

What happened next?

We then sat in a room—Steve, Chris and myself—sometimes with Jo Rowling, talking about the script. Jo was generous—she never said, "It has to be like this." She knew we just wanted to make the best film possible. She knew we were the filmmakers, and she was the writer. She gave us endless resources because she had great knowledge. We were a tree, and she was the roots.

Was the adaptation process difficult?

Was it hard? No. All we wanted to do was to be faithful to these books—and there was so much in these books. The books were so alive. The only problem was trying to fit it all in two-and-a-half hours.

How long did it take to get the adaptation done?

Kloves took quite a bit to write his script. He took six months. Once Chris came aboard, we were writing until we began shooting. That took another six months. So all in all, it took about a year.

We know you did have to leave scenes out because of that reason which, of course, will be criticized by some hardcore fans. Is there a particular scene you wished you could have put in?

There are a couple. One that we contemplated was the scene with Norbert. Norbert is a great character—I love how he is in the film. We had actually written a scene when Harry and Ron are carrying him in the invisibility cloak and he burns a hole in the cloak so you can see a bit of them. We thought we would have a lot of fun with that. But ultimately, we decided not to do that. One, the film's already two-and-a-half hours long. Kids don't feel it's that long. I don't think it's long. But we didn't want to make a movie that was five or six hours long.

Together with Jo, we really took what were the most important scenes to define the place, move the story forward and to work with the characters. And I think it worked. Jo seemed happy. Ultimately, it's up to the audience. And you're absolutely right. There are hardcore fans who will say, "Oh, this isn't right." But they all say, so far, maybe it's the honeymoon stage, "Oh, you left this scene out. But I love the film."

Conversely, then, is there a scene that you shot and immediately said, "Wow, I can't believe we actually got it exactly as it should be"?

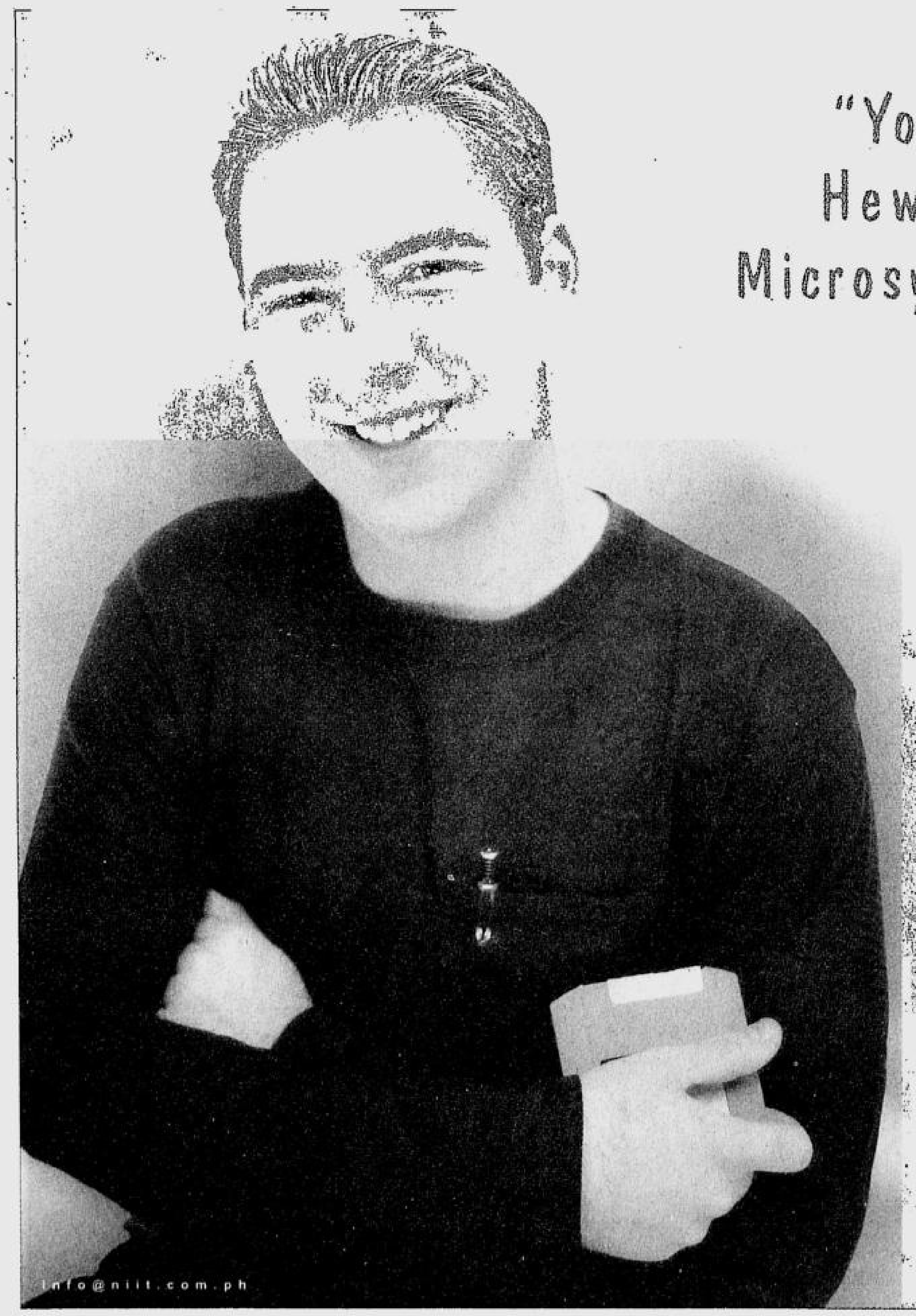
No one in particular, but I think Quidditch was pretty remarkable, because we used technology in a way it had never been used before. We were pushing to a new frontier in terms of computer generation. Sony did a remarkable job. I love those big scenes. But the scenes I love are the more intimate scenes. I like Ollivander's. I like the scene where Harry gets his presents for Christmas; like the invisibility cloak. I like the Mirror of Erised. Those are the heart and soul of the movie. The big scenes work because you care about the people.

You've read all the four books, more than once. Is there a particular book you're looking forward to producing all seven of them?

The one I look forward to reading is Book Five because it's not out yet. But I love all the books. I love Book Two. I love the Dementors. They're fantastic. Jo's imagination is so rich and it's such a great world to be part of.

THE MAGIC/ p.F4

"PROFESSOR Flitwick"



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36 months	P 38,134	P 20,027	P 20,318
24 months	P 51,576	P 27,087	P 27,481
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Monthly Installment			
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36 months	P 33,367	P 17,524	P 17,778
24 months	P 45,129	P 23,701	P 24,045
18 months	P 58,064	P 30,495	P 30,938
40% downpayment	P 524,000	P 275,200	P 279,200
Monthly Installment			
60 months	P 19,782	P 10,389	P 10,540
48 months	P 23,055	P 12,108	P 12,284
36 months	P 28,600	P 15,020	P 15,239
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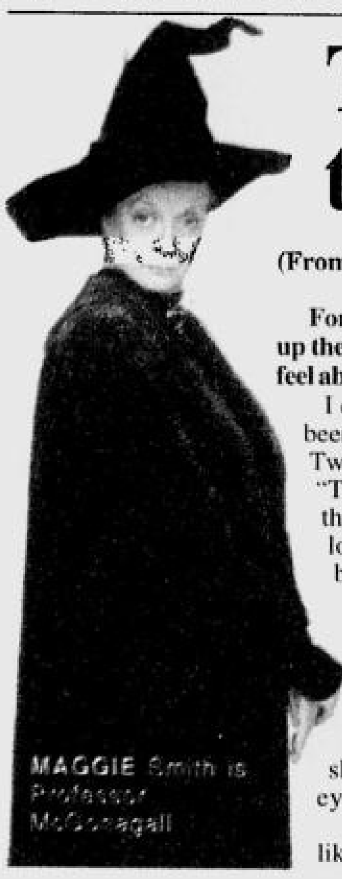


MAGGIE Smith is Professor McGonagall

The magic man behind the 'Harry Potter' movie

(From page F2)

For you personally, from the time you picked up the book in 1997 and up to now, how do you feel about the production?

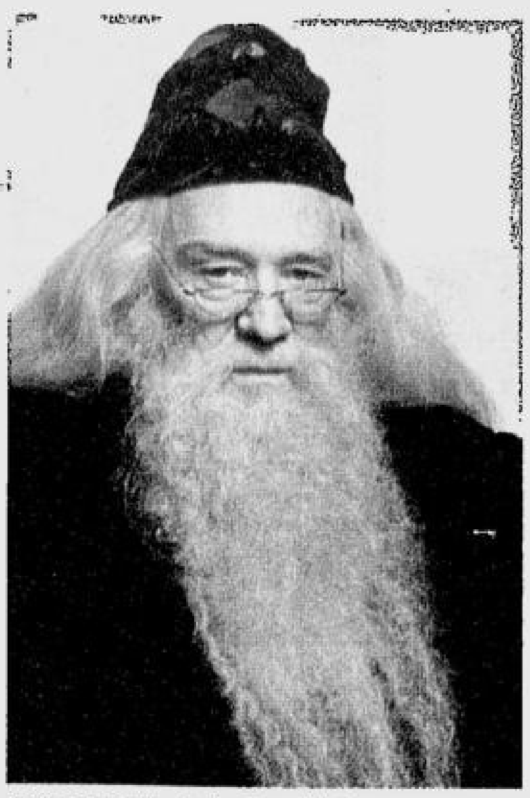
I clearly feel very good about it. I've never been involved with a production of this scale. Two or three years ago, I made a movie called "The Daytrippers." It was worlds apart from this movie. It was made for $60,000. I had a lot of fun doing that, and I would like to go back to doing that.

This has been such a great time. Chris Columbus is a generous and creative man. He inspires us with his energy, his decency, his commitment. He would go home to his family every weekend during preproduction. That kind of love shows up in the film. It really opened my eyes.

It's also been great working with talents like (production designer) Stuart Craig, (cinematographer) John Seale, and (costume designer) Judianna Makovsky, and the thousands of production people and technicians who made it possible. This film works because it's about great characters—great people with stories. It's also about details. Details make the film. As a producer, I have to make sure we get the details right.

There are projections that "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" might become the most profitable film of all time. Some people say this film comes at the perfect time, when people want to forget about the world's problems, at least for a while. How do you feel about that?.

We all know the world has been on heightened alert since the events of Sept. 11. What I do think is that this film is a place you can go to for two-and-a-half hours—or even longer, if you watch it again—another world, a world where family and friendship are important. About how wonderful those things are. And that's what life should be about.



RICHARD Harris is Dumbledore

Children's book illustration contest accepting entries

THE PHILIPPINE Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) is now accepting entries for the 2002 PBBY Illustrators' Prize. The contest is cosponsored by the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the National Library. The winner will be given a cash prize of P25,000, a gold medal and an opportunity to be published with the help of the PBBY. Prizes will be awarded during the celebration of National Children's Book Day on July 16, 2002.

The contest is open to all Filipino citizens except those who are related to any PBBY member up to the third degree of consanguinity. Entries must be based on the winning story "Uuwi na ang Nanay Kong si Darna" by Edgar Samar. Copies of the story may be requested from the PBBY secretariat.

All entries must be original unpublished illustrations that have not won in any previous contest; they must consist of three illustrations that are of the same size and medium.

A contestant may send in more than one entry. Each entry must be signed by a pen name only, preferably on a small piece of paper pasted on the back of each artwork. Entries with a signature or identifying marks are automatically disqualified. Together with each entry, contestants must submit a separate envelope, on the face of which only the pen name of the contestant shall appear. The envelope must contain the contestant's full name, address, contact numbers, short description of background, and notarized certification vouching for the originality of the entry and for the freedom of the organizers from any liability arising from the infringement of copyright in case of publication;

All entries must be sent to the PBBY Secretariat, c/o Adarna House, 73-A Scout Limbaga St., Barangay Laging Handa, QC. All entries must be received by the PBBY Secretariat by 5 p.m., Feb. 15, 2002. Winners will be announced no later than March 15, 2002. Visit the PBBY at 73-A Scout Limbaga St., Barangay Laging Handa, QC, or call 372-3548 or 49, fax 372-4204, or e-mail pbby@adarna.com.ph addressed to the PBBY secretariat.

FEU stages play on Rizal's last moments with his family

THE FAR Eastern University, through its President's Committee on Culture, will present "Calamba: 1888," an adaptation by Dr. Amalia Cullarin-Rosales of "Parting at Calamba" by National Artist for Theater Dr. Severino Montano at the FEU Auditorium on Nov. 21-22, 10:40 a.m. and 3:10 p.m. Stage and television actor Prof. Dodi Dizon directs.

Initially produced by the Polytechnic University of the Philippines College of Arts, the play depicts poignant scenes from the last moments of Dr. Jose Rizal with his family. Records show that Rizal returned to the Philippines from Europe to help his countrymen in their plight against some persons of authority, to find out how his book "Noli me Tangere" was faring, and to cure his mother's eyes. An unarticulated reason for his homecoming was to know the cause of his loved one Leonor Rivera's silence.

"Calamba's" cast includes Ihman Esturco as Jose Rizal; Rustica Carpio, Doña Teodora; Amy Rosales, Saturnina; Ces Aldaba, Padre Dalmacio; Kathy Arguelles, Soledad; Lucy Valenzuela, Trinidad; Milagros Cañares, vendor/narrator; Valentin Simon, Alfredo; and Donna Garcia, Adela.

The production staff includes Amalia Rosales, production manager; Kriztine Viray, stage manager; Dodi Dizon, lighting designer; Pacelli Eugenio, set designer and sound designer; Krizjohn Rosales, Reylan Viray and Mary Jane Mendoza, assistant stage managers; Beejay Macris Chua, lighting assistant; and Ericson Cabrera, makeup artist.

Rene Villanueva and Cris Millado in forum on drama at UST

TOP theater artists Rene Villanueva and Cris Millado will be the featured speakers in the "USTingan," the regular forum on literary issues organized by the Center for Creative Writing and Studies (CCWS) of the University of Santo Tomas, on Nov. 21, 2 p.m., at the CCWS seminar-workshop rooms, 1/F St. Raymund's (AB-Commerce) Building, UST campus, España, Manila.

Villanueva and Millado will tackle "Dula: Texto o Teatro?" and discuss the textual and theatrical dimensions of playwriting. Villanueva is a multiawarded dramatist and the writer of "Batibot," the popular children's TV show. Millado is associate artistic director of Tanghalang Pilipino, the resident theater company of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The panel of reactors will be composed of Mike Coroza, UST junior writing associate for poetry in Filipino; Ferdinand Lopez, coordinator for literature of the UST Faculty of Arts and Letters; and Jose Victor Torres, UST junior writing associate for drama.

The public is invited. Call 731-3101 local 8281.

Book on Thomasites

THE AMERICAN Association of the Phils. and the Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy, with Anvil Publishing Inc., will launch the book "Bearers of Benevolence: The Thomasites and Public Education in the Philippines," edited by Mary Racelis and Judy Celine A. Ick, tomorrow, 6 p.m., at The Club, Seafront Compound, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

"Bearers of Benevolence" is an anthology of recollections, eyewitness accounts and official documents from the participants of the historic event that took place a century ago, during the time when the American colonial government in the Philippines created a wide-scale public education system throughout the islands. The voices of soldier-teachers, Thomasites, government bureaucrats and Filipino students in the book speak of high hopes and hardships, self-satisfaction and sacrifice.

Mary Racelis is a sociologist who directs the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University. She complied and edited "Tales of the American Teachers in the Philippines" in 1959, together with Geronima T. Pecson.

Judy Celine Ick is an associate professor of English and comparative literature at UP Diliman. She was also the project director of the Thomasites Centennial Project.

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   - Metro Manila Winners- Globe Telecom Treasury Cashier at the 2F Globe Telecom Plaza, Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City.
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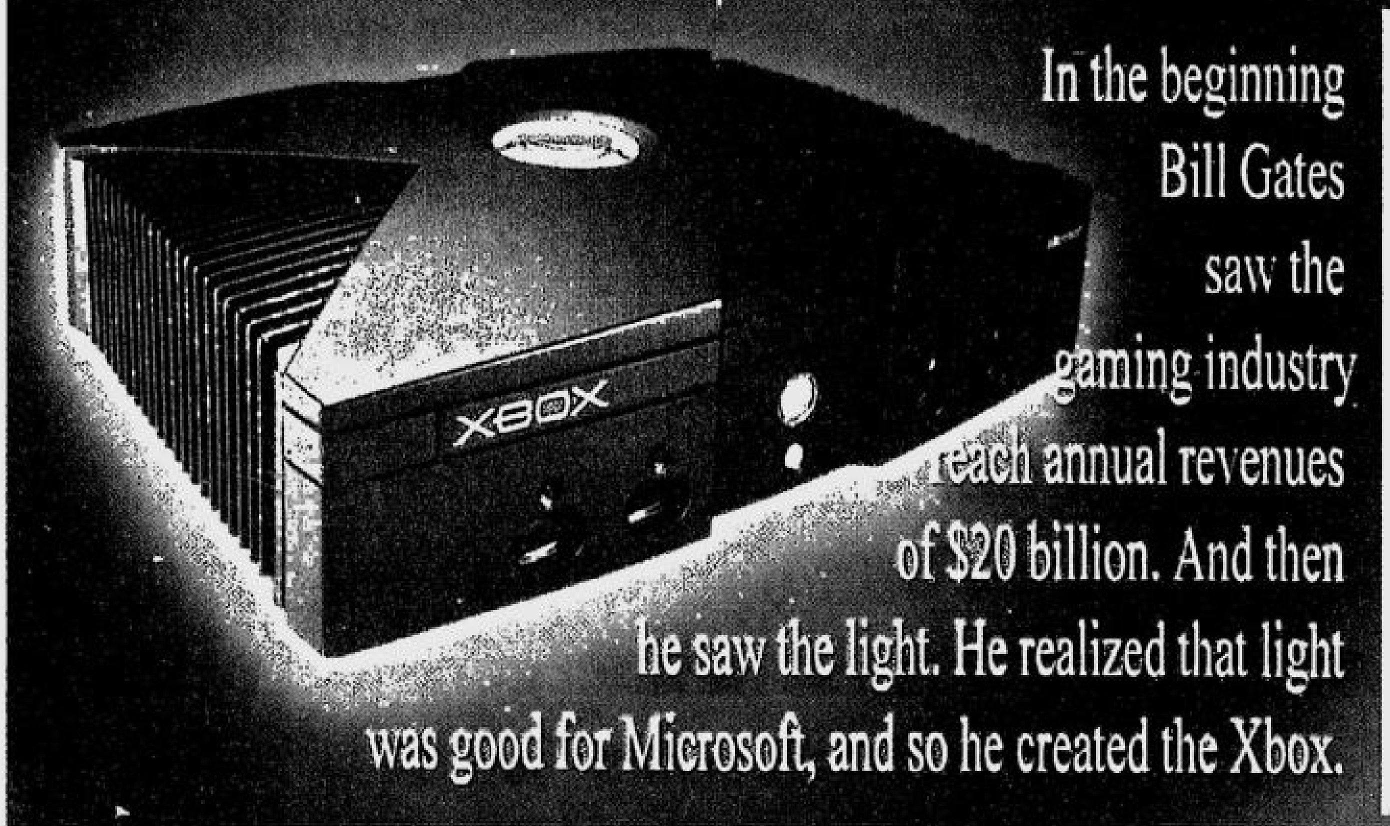
INFOTECH
LEO MAGNO, Editor

THE XBOX COMETH



In the beginning Bill Gates saw the gaming industry reach annual revenues of $20 billion. And then he saw the light. He realized that light was good for Microsoft, and so he created the Xbox.

COMPETITION on the video game market escalated Nov. 15 with the launch of Microsoft's Xbox, marking the entry of the software giant into a sector dominated by Japanese firms Sony and Nintendo.

The Xbox is in direct rivalry with Sony's PlayStation 2, which has sold more than 20 million units since its release in October last year, and, to a lesser degree, Nintendo's GameCube, which debuted in North America on Nov. 18.

The Microsoft console, to be marketed Feb. 22 in Japan and on March 14 in Europe, was on the shelves in more than 15,000 US stores. Many have already sold out to avid customers who reserved their Xbox before Nov. 15.

Microsoft, throwing itself into the hardware market for the first time, distributed 300,000 consoles on launch day. It expects to sell 1.5 million Xboxes before year's end, while analysts put the total at about one million.

On the Internet auction site eBay, more than 2,700 Xbox consoles were up for grabs, most of them by individual sellers who had pre-reserved their units, according to eBay spokesperson Jennifer Carr. One auction included the Xbox, nine games and the DVD controller, which started at $1 on Nov. 8, was

THE XBOX/ p.G3

READ MORE ABOUT THIS STORY ONLINE
inQ7.net

The call of the Xbox
http://www.inq7.net/inf/2001/nov/19/inf_digitalinq-1.htm

Microsoft Xbox launch to heat up game console wars
http://www.inq7.net/inf/2001/nov/17/inf_3-1.htm

X marks the spot
http://www.inq7.net/inf/2001/nov/16/inf_2-1.htm

Can Xbox do for Microsoft what Windows did to the PC?

BY LEO MAGNO

A FEW days ago, on Nov. 15, Microsoft Corp. launched the Xbox in the States with as much hoopla as the launch of the software giant's new Windows XP.

Suddenly, the world's largest software publisher became a hardware manufacturer overnight. But not without help from an electronics manufacturing service (EMS) company called Flextronics. Far from the glare and glitz of the Xbox launch is a company which has enabled Microsoft—which has never operated a single hardware factory—stand toe to toe with Sony, the world's biggest consumer electronics manufacturer.

Microsoft's much-anticipated Xbox gaming console is actually manufactured by Flextronics which churns out the device from its Guadalajara, Mexico plant. Flextronics has been in the EMS business for quite a while now. It makes cell phones for Ericsson, routers for Cisco, printers for Hewlett-Packard and PDAs for Palm. For Project Xbox, Flextronics had to make 800,000 units available for the Nov. 15 launch plus 700,000 more by yearend. This goes to show you that electronics manufacturing has become a commodity. All that budget which used to be set aside for manufacturing and factory infrastructure is now going into design, innovation and marketing.

But could there be more than meets the eye with the long-awaited release of the Xbox?

Microsoft announced plans that it would enter the interactive home gaming market two years ago. This was about the same time the company announced that it would be unifying its operating system product line under Windows XP. Aside from the fact that Microsoft finally admitted that its different operating systems were not entirely compatible with one another, this announcement was also an admission that even a giant like the Seattle-based organization has to face the music and dance to the tune of consolidation.

This makes us take a second look at the timeliness of Microsoft's entry into the gaming industry. Software sales are dipping. Piracy levels are still high. Industry investment in operating system upgrades is declining. How could Gates continue churning out the numbers it used to?

By entering the interactive gaming arena, Microsoft has created an entirely different platform for itself and third party developers on which they could create new software. However, instead of applications, Microsoft and the others will now create new games. Five out of 17 Xbox launch titles are made by Microsoft, and it is now involved in 40 other first-party Xbox games, excluding 12 more being created for the Japanese market.

History shows us how influential Microsoft can be when it comes to third-party developer support. The company claims it now has 200 third-party developers creating Xbox games as part of the pool of a huge $20-billion-a-year market.

Think about it: PC sales are declining. More and more of Microsoft's sales are coming from preloaded versions of Windows and Windows applications. Upgrade sales from Windows 97 and 2000 have declined, and the same can happen to XP.

By creating a gaming console on which Microsoft and other developers can produce more software, Gates is all set to dominate another platform the way Windows did to the PC industry.

Remember Gates' vision? It's to have Windows on a PC on every desktop in every home. A few years ago Gates realized that entertainment would take him inside more of these homes, and so he invested on the WebTV, which unfortunately flopped. With the Xbox, Gates can very well creep into your home soon, if not through the PC, through a new game console called the Xbox.

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Nokia to launch 2 new cellular phones today

NOKIA, the world's largest handset maker, will launch two new mobile phones today including one with a big color screen in an attempt to match products from rivals, Swedish media reported on Friday.

Nokia declined to comment on the two models, which look like a direct challenge to recently launched and well-received devices from arch rival Sony Ericsson like the T68 model, which has a color screen, and the cheaper T65.

Swedish media reported, without citing sources but displaying photos showing the devices, that Nokia would unveil the 7650 color-screen phone and the 5210 device, targeted at the youth market, at the Nokia Mobile Internet conference in Barcelona.

Nokia phone launches are important for the industry because of the Finnish company's No. 1 position in handsets, with a 34-percent share of the global market.

"We do not confirm nor comment on the speculations in the Swedish media," Nokia spokesperson Tapio Hedman said. "We have not made any new product announcements since the 5510. We do not pre-announce phone launches."

The 5510, which doubles up as a music player and features a keyboard for text typing, was unveiled last month, and that device also appeared in the media prior to the official launch.

The 7650, which would be Nokia's first color display phone, has a large screen covering most of the device with a joy stick—like Sony Ericsson's T68—to navigate through the menu, according to images shown on several Swedish Internet sites.

Underneath the cover rests a standard phone keyboard, which slides out from underneath for use. Analysts expected the phone to be priced at the higher-end of the market.

Nokia has been pressed to unveil more advanced models since Sony Ericsson, a recently formed mobile phone venture, launched the T68 in Europe and other mobile Internet-enabled devices.

It was unclear if the two devices would run GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) technology currently being rolled out in Europe, which offer speedy and "always-on" Internet connection.

But the 7650 was expected to be a challenger to devices, like Samsung's, powered by the Microsoft Stinger operating system and Internet browser, which has not yet hit the market.

Analysts expected the 7650 to have Web-friendly Java software and multimedia messaging service (MMS), which is seen replacing popular SMS text messaging. MMS will allow users to send long messages, pictures and audio to other users.

Earlier this year Nokia said it would have 50 million mobile phones powered with Java, which lets users download games and other programs from the Internet, on the market next year. Nokia also said it planned to launch several new products by the third quarter next year which have Java. *Reuters*

Automated Unisys solution makes civil registry info retrieval civilized

BY GERRY PLAZA

QUEUES at the National Statistics Office (NSO) for civil registry documents seem kilometric and tedious, with a good number of procedures. These procedures range from the acceptance of forms to the retrieval of the actual documents themselves, appearing more burdensome and tormenting. People who may have originated from faraway areas such as Isabela and Bicol have had to go all the way to Manila—in two separate offices of the NSO—for application and retrieval of the documents, with each visit needing at least two long queues.

Today, the NSO customer demand for the issuance, authentication and certification of civil registry documents has increased to an average of 10,000 requests daily. An increasing volume of such documents handled by the agency further compounds the situation.

But the agony is about to end—if we take the NSO's word that a full implementation of its Civil Registry System-Information Technology Project (CRS-ITP) would be completed in two years.

The project, which allows applicants for civil registry documents—such as birth, marriage and death certificates—to apply and retrieve their documents in one visit to a neighborhood office or outlet of the NSO or to the agency's main office in East Avenue, Quezon City in a "while-you-wait" and "request anywhere" process that would take at most 45 minutes. It was envisioned to enhance the processing of requests, shorter lines at the application, payment and retrieval counters and improved NSO facilities available to the public.

The CRS-ITP involves automation of document copy issuance, authentication and certification of civil registry documents. It likewise entails conversion of more than 47 million paper documents into microfilm and over 113 million microfilmed documents into digital format.

For this initiative, the NSO is set to establish branch offices or outlets of the CRS nationwide allowing people to apply for civil registry documents in their respective localities and not have to travel all the way to Manila to secure them. It will also alleviate the plight of NSO customers who have to travel to Manila for the documents. This would allow applicants to save on transportation, food and even lodging costs since they only have to go to their assigned provincial outlet. As part of this move, a wide area network infrastructure is being built to answer the outlets' communication requirements.

The P3.3-billion project was implemented under a Build-Transfer-Operate scheme between the NSO and Unisys Philippines. All in all, Unisys provides full investment into the project, making it the first foreign firm to undertake 100 percent equity in a local government project.

"We are very much excited about the project," said Gabriel Leiva, Unisys Philippines president and general manager. "It offers convenience to those in need of their civil

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Son of HP co-founder still undecided on proxy fight in HP-Compaq merger

NEW YORK—Walter Hewlett, the son of the co-founder of Hewlett-Packard Co., has not yet decided whether to solicit votes against the company's proposed acquisition of Compaq Computer Corp., a spokesperson for Hewlett said on Friday, but a regulatory filing indicated just the opposite.

Hewlett and his family members control more than 5 percent of Hewlett-Packard, and last week they said they would vote against the merger. They also hired proxy-solicitation firm McKenzie Partners Inc., which typically indicates a battle for shareholder votes is in the works.

On Friday, Hewlett filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission a copy of a third-party presentation that he and the William R. Hewlett Revocable Trust received regarding the merger. As part of the filing, Hewlett said he intended to file a shareholder proxy to solicit votes.

A spokesperson, however, said Hewlett in fact had not yet decided whether to solicit votes.

"He's keeping all his options open for the moment," the spokesperson said.

On Wednesday, Hewlett-Packard reported better-than-expected earnings per share. In addition to boosting its stock price, the news has increased confidence among some analysts and investors that the Compaq deal will go through.

The proposed stock-swap transaction, announced in the first week of September, is valued at $23.7 billion. *Reuters*

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PHILIPPINES

Council outlines e-society strategy for the Philippines

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

THE INFORMATION Technology and E-commerce Council (ITECC), the highest policymaking body on IT, has recently disclosed a vision called "e-society" that aims to make information technology more pervasive across Philippine society.

The ITECC's e-society vision is pegged on several areas which include e-government, human resource development, e-learning and providing a legal and regulatory environment that focuses on intellectual property rights, Internet security and consumer protection, according to Virgilio Peña, executive director of the ITECC.

The vision also includes the creation of the Department of Information and Communications Technology, a super IT agency that will set the country's policies, direction, vision and e-society strategy for the Philippines.

Peña said that in the short term, the Council aims to boost information technology services, which the Filipinos are good at. He identified call center solutions as a service the country can provide.

Representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry and the private sector are currently in the United States to lure potential clients wanting to outsource their customer and support operations in the Philippines, Toby Melissa Monsod, assistant secretary for IT, said in an earlier interview.

Stressing on what President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said in her State of the Nation Address, Peña said that the Council, with government and private sector support, will do more activities promoting IT services because these are the sources of "high-value jobs."

"To increase the country's gross national product, we also need to increase the value of our own workers," he said.

Meanwhile, the Council is now working closely with government on identifying "IT hubs" in the country. Peña said that these hubs would be the focus of infrastructure build-up, which is both supported by the government and private sector.

Internet penetration in the Philippines remains dismal, with less than one percent of 77 million Filipinos having computers in homes; Access to computers, however; might be higher as the number of Internet cafés has increased in the country in the recent years.

Peña said that the e-society vision also involves government programs that aim to improve Math, Science and English education in the Philippines, the creation of legislative and regulatory policies that will support the e-society vision, and rationalization of the e-government program of the country.

Under the E-commerce Law, all government agencies should be "wired" within the year. However; realizing the slow pace of compliance to the law, the Council is looking at areas where e-governance can be truly implemented.

"We want to identify areas in government that should be tackled first. It should not be a shotgun approach," Peña said, adding that the Council will soon come out with a definition of e-governance and a World Bank-inspired classification of the "level of e-governance" in each agency.

"The problem with e-governance is they are like functional silos. They're operating independent of each other. In the new economy, everyone is networked. E-government should be looked at from the perspective of the public. At the same time, we should look at developing systems that can work across agencies, aside from consolidating e-governance efforts in each agency," Pena stressed.

"Computerization without networking will not work," he added.

The Council has created various subcommittees that will outline strategies and action plans for the fulfillment of the e-society vision. These sub-committees would report to the executive committee comprising members from the government and private sector.

While it is considered the highest policymaking body in IT in the Philippines, the ITECC is not an implementing authority, Peña admitted.

After its reconstitution this year, the Council is now headed by Ms Macapagal, and is co-chaired by Roberto Romulo and Jaime Zobel Augusto de Ayala.

DISCUSS THIS ISSUE ONLINE AT INQ7.net

Do you think President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is really an ICT champion or is she just riding on the ICT wave? You can discuss this issue online at the Discussion Boards of INQ7.net. Just click on Discussions on the navigation bar or go to discussions.inq7.net.

The Xbox cometh

(From page G1)

bid up to $1,125 as of the afternoon of Nov. 14. Only 644 GameCubes were on sale at eBay.

Microsoft chair Bill Gates was in New York on Nov. 15 at a huge Toys R Us store for a pre-sale, welcoming customers and playing a few rounds with video game addicts who had anxiously awaited the Xbox launch.

The world's largest software maker hopes the Xbox, which sells for $299, will quickly make its mark on US households, and has not skimped in promoting it, committing $500 million to its advertising campaign.

The rather heavy console, about the size of a video cassette recorder, is aimed at gamers between the ages of 17 and 26, just like Sony's PlayStation 2, sold at the same price. GameCube, which sells for $199, is targeted at children and adolescents.

The group will suffer losses at first from its Xbox launch, perhaps up to a billion dollars by 2004, according to investment bank Morgan Stanley Dean Witter.

Microsoft can make up some of the losses incurred in the development and launch of the console through the sale of games at a higher profit margin. Xbox also has Internet capability, with the firm hoping to make a dent in the online gaming market, which experts say could happen next year.

There are 15 to 20 games now available for Xbox, as compared with about 10 for GameCube. Some 175 video games are available for PlayStation 2.

A flashy midnight launch marked the start of Microsoft's intense drive to score big in the $20-billion interactive gaming business. Gates was on hand in the wee hours of the morning of Nov. 15 as hundreds of video-game enthusiasts queued up in New York's Times Square to be the first to buy the most powerful video game console ever.

Gates walked the line of videogamers like a rock star, shaking hands and delighting Xbox fans by signing their copies of the game machine.

Brian O'Rourke, analyst with research firm Cahners In-Stat Group, said Microsoft's sheer marketing might and track record for product development bode well for Xbox, even though the company's near-term sales will equal only a fraction of the existing multiple-generations of Nintendo and Sony units.

"I think they will be successful, but the fact that they are a software company coming into a competitive hardware market, it will take them a while to find their way," he said.

Despite the challenges, Microsoft's Gates, a Harvard dropout who became the world's richest man, sees consumers warming up to Xbox. The appeal for Xbox will come first as a pure game machine and eventually as a home entertainment center.

"The history of Microsoft is that we are willing to bet big on new things," Gates told Reuters. "We have put over $1 billion into the various aspects of this, and it's a business where we are going to have to sell a lot. But we are in it because we believe in improving entertainment in the living room and we believe we can have products work together in a very rich way."

Toysrus.com, the online arm of the leading toy retailer, sold out its allotment of Xboxes in 40 minutes, 45 seconds on the afternoon of Nov. 15, a spokesperson said.

Several electronics retailers in Manhattan also sold out of the new machine in the first few minutes, although supplies were limited.

"We only had six," said one employee at CompUSA on Manhattan's prestigious Fifth Ave. "The rest went to pre-orders."

P.J. McNealy, a senior analyst at GartnerG2, estimated that 10 percent of the Xboxes shipped may have been pre-sold bundles with games.

The Times Square launch included a tag-team event featuring Gates and World Wrestling Federation star Duane "The Rock" Johnson. Microsoft has purchased significant advertising time in World Wrestling Federation Entertainment's television programming.

Sales of the Xbox and other competing consoles are expected to drive the best holiday season ever for the video game business, despite otherwise uninspiring economic conditions.

High-profile Internet analyst Henry Blodget said a strong debut would not guarantee the long-term success of the Xbox, noting the failure of the Sega Dreamcast, which was ultimately scrapped after a similarly explosive launch.

"For the Xbox to succeed long-term, it will be critical for the product to appeal to the mass market in addition to the hard core," Blodget wrote in a research note. "In our view, this issue will not be decided until Christmas 2002."

Reuters and AFP

THE XBOX controller, shown here in its actual size, is a bit bigger and heavier than controllers of other game consoles, but the Xbox has four ports for four simultaneous players in one console.

COMPARATIVE CHART OF NEW GAME CONSOLES

	XBOX	PS2	GameCube
CPU	733 MHz Pentium III	300 MHz Emotion Engine	405 MHz IBM PowerPC
Graphics Processor	250MHz nVidia custom chip	150 MHz Sony GS	200 MHz Artx Flipper
Memory	64 Mb (unified)	32 Mb system, 4 Mb graphics	43 Mb
Polygon Performance	125 million per second	66 million per second	12 million per second
Particle Performance	125 million per second	150 million per second	N/A
Compressed Textures	Yes	No	N/A
Media	5X DVD drive, 8 Gb hard disk	4x DVD drive, 8 Mb mem card	1.5 Gb disk, 4 Mb Digicard
Broadband Enabled	Yes	Future upgrade	Optional
Joystick Ports	4	2	N/A
I/O ports	Modified USB	IEEE1394, USB	Custom
Connectivity	Ethernet port	Future modem upgrade	Ethernet port
DVD Movie playback	Built-in, accessory required	Yes, but utility required	N/A
HDTV Support	Yes	Limited	No
Audio Channels	256	48	64
3D Audio support	Yes	No	N/A
Maximum Resolution	1920 x 1080	1280 x 1024	N/A

Hewlett-Packard pushes single platform, multiple OS strategy

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

HEWLETT-PACKARD has disclosed plans to create a single platform that will support multiple operating systems (OS), specifically Windows, Linux and Unix, local officials said last week.

The multiple OS system will be powered by Intel's Itanium chips, which is specifically designed to run powerful computer servers.

HP said that the latest computer servers will no longer serve specific platforms, such as Windows 2000, but will be designed to "fit the needs of customers."

"I call this strategy the 3Cs," said Arturo Bacqui, director for technical consulting organization of HP Philippines, adding that this is HP's way of differentiating itself from computer behemoth IBM, which has a long list of computer server products that could "confuse" customers.

The 3Cs stand for "common platform, choice of OS and comprehensiveness (which deals with middleware or software that acts as bridge between different applications)," Bacqui said. "There will be a common server across all OSes, consistent business practices, single vendor sales, support and services and industry-leading middleware technology."

Quoting an earlier Aberdeen Group executive white paper published in September 2001, Bacqui claims that HP's multi-OS strategy puts the company in a "stronger" position in the "enterprise platform" market.

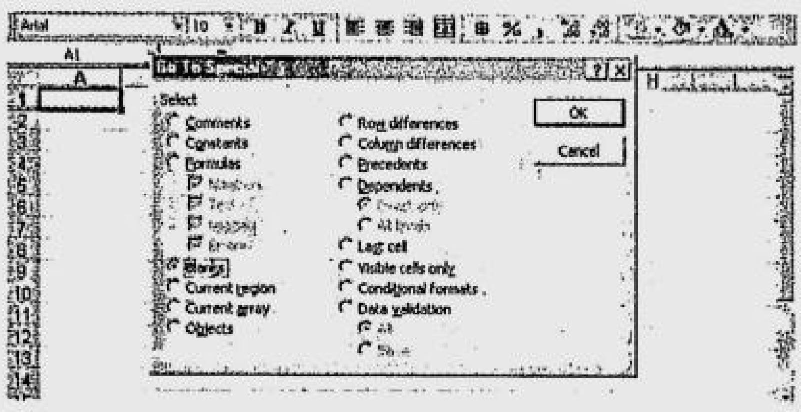
"IBM's strategy is far more complex because it involves multiple OSes, multiple platforms. Sun is simple but it limits users to one choice (of platform)," added Bacqui, noting the Aberdeen Group executive white paper.

Raymund del Val, HP Philippines general manager, noted that HP's server strategy is based on its e-services concept, where multiple OSes running on a single platform will be the center of "service-centric" computing.

Service-centric computing involves a simple but powerful system architecture that enables the seamless interaction of different Internet-based applications, devices and networks.

"To be able to position HP as a trusted adviser (in the industry), the company has to have a deep understanding of customer and business trends because they are the lenses through which HP views the world," he said.

HP and Compaq disclosed merger plans this year amid the slowdown in the PC industry. With both companies combined, the result will create another giant that industry analysts think would compete with IBM and Sun on the server market.



HAVE you ever encountered blank cells in your Microsoft Excel spreadsheet which you want to get rid of? There's a trick you can perform to make these cells go away; you only need to do a few adjustments.

Removing blank cells in Microsoft Excel

By Jerry Liao

POWERTIPS

HERE'S a trick that will remove all blank cells in your Microsoft Excel worksheet:

(1) Select your worksheet's key field and highlight it.

(2) Select "Edit," then "Goto" then "Special."

(3) Under the "Goto Special" dialog box, select "Blank" then click "OK."

(4) Go back to "Edit" and choose "Delete."

(5)The "Delete" dialog box will be displayed; choose from the options given then click "OK."

(6) All your blank cells will now be deleted.

For more tips, visit www.brainshare.com.ph. We would like to invite our readers to join The Powertips Group. Simply register online at www.brainshare.com.ph/register.htm and receive free tips via e-mail. For your comments, questions and suggestions, send your email to infochat@mozcom.com.

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(From page G2)

registry documents and allows NSO employees to work more efficiently."

The project was awarded to Unisys in 1999 and went into full implementation the next year. By mid-2000, user acceptance was achieved, allowing live operations in the East Avenue main office.

"The NSO now processes up to 9,000 transactions daily and serves up to 5,000 people with the new system," Leiva said.

Digital conversion of the country's 160 million civil registry documents is ongoing and Leiva projects completion of this phase in 2003. By then, transactions would be dispersed to the various city and provincial CRS outlets, allowing the quick application and retrieval of civil registry documents wherever the person may be.

"At present, we already have a good number of documents already converted," Leiva said. "This means people can actually go to the NSO main office at East Avenue and get their documents faster."

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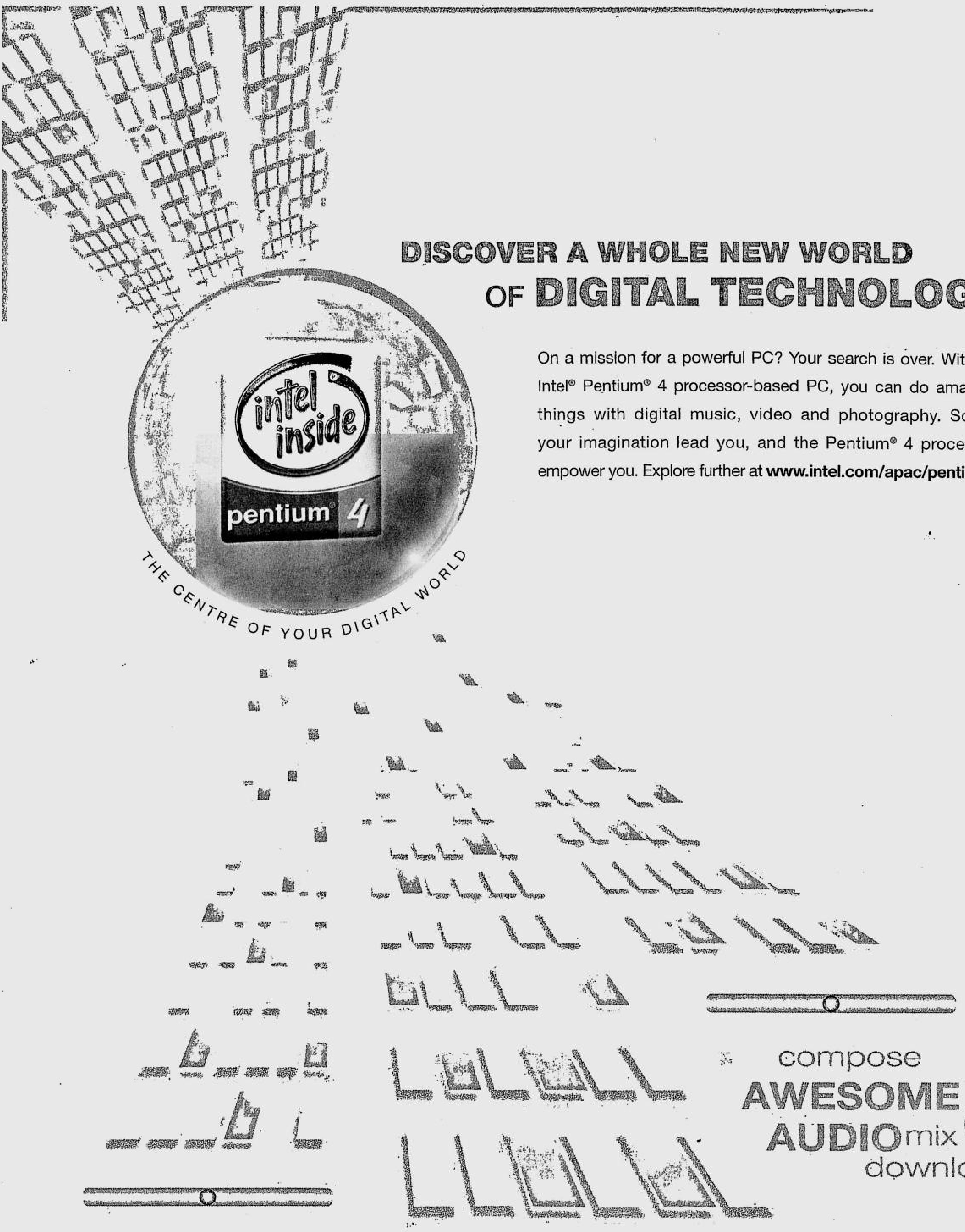
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